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THE LIFE

OF

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

R Macfarlane
Perth 1843

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THE LIFE

OF

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE REBELLIONS IN SCOTLAND," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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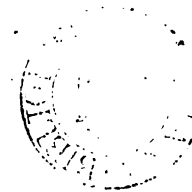

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PREFACE.

I HAVE little to say in laying this work before the public, except that I have endeavoured to make it as amusing as the nature of the subject might lead the public to expect. Several years ago, the grotesque and familiar character of King James the First seemed to me so likely to suit the style of writing I was most accustomed to practise, that I resolved, as soon as other engagements would permit, to make it the subject of a book. An opportunity having now occurred, I lay my labours before the public; hoping, with the usual earnestness of an author's hope, that my selection of a theme will not be deemed unfortunate.

EDINBURGH, *May* 19, 1830.

LIFE

OF

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

JAMES'S ANCESTRY—HIS BIRTH AND INFANCY.

1566—1571.

ALTHOUGH the whole history and character of James the First is peculiar and remarkable, it may perhaps be asserted, that nothing about him is more so than the strange contrast which he presents, in our associations, to his parents, and to the time, place, and other circumstances of his birth. When we consider James by himself, we think of him as of a timid, good-natured, somewhat pedantic, old man; possessed of some sense and much learning; who burnt witches, and became the chronicler of their mis-deeds; who was very weak in the legs, and much given to leaning on the shoulders, and twitching the cheeks, of young gentlemen; who was at first King of the poor but ancient kingdom of Scotland, and after-

wards, by a fortunate chance, sovereign of all the three realms forming the British empire; who was very foolish, but very fortunate; liked hunting and the Church of England; was much afraid of assassination, as he had too much need, and never could bear to see a drawn sword or a cocked pistol; who was, altogether, a droll, bustling, fidgetting, incomprehensible old gentleman, more like a schoolmaster than a king, and, ten to one, calculated to wield the ferula with more dignity, and also better effect, than the sceptre. In opposition to this train of ideas, upon the whole so ridiculous, we find that the mother of James was Mary Stuart; that name of tears; that most admirable and hapless woman; that word to conjure up all that a poet can dream of beauty, or a historian quote of misfortune; for whom the highest advantages of birth and person procured but the extreme of misery; who seemed only born for a throne that she might perish on a scaffold. Side by side with this idea, and equally opposed to that of King James, we have Darnley, his boy-father; the tall young knight who rode for a time in gilded armour by Mary's side, alike ready to fondle and protect—who afterwards fell a prey, in his unsuspecting puerility, to a band of full-grown traitors, in whose hands he was as the lily is to the whirlwind. Equally opposed to James himself, are his ancestors; on the one side, the series of chivalric kings who held sway over Scotland from a time antecedent to all authentic history; on the other, the line of the stately Plantagenets, and the warlike Douglases. * Nor is it less curious to view

* Perhaps a genealogical note may here be necessary. James was descended, by both his parents, from King

the prosperous and this-world tenor of his long fortunate life, and the gay southern scene in which the better part of it was spent, in contrast to the dark and stormy era of his birth, the scene of that event, and the people amidst whom it took place.

James's history properly commences before he entered the world. The well-known incident of Rizzio's death, which took place upwards of three months prior to his birth, as it is supposed to have produced some effect upon both his physical and moral constitution, seems entitled to the first notice in these Memoirs. It is needless, of course, to enter into any detail of the circumstances which

Henry VII. of England, who, being himself the representative of the Lancaster branch of the Plantagenets, and marrying Elizabeth of York, the descendant of the other, united in his children, as it was said, the pretensions of both the *Roses*. Henry's eldest daughter Margaret, was, by James IV. of Scotland, the mother of James V., who in his turn was, through his daughter Mary, the grandfather of James VI. Queen Margaret, by a second marriage to Archibald, Earl of Angus, was the mother of lady Margaret Douglas, who, being married to Matthew, Earl of Lennox, became the mother of Lord Darnley, father to the subject of our Memoir. Darnley and Mary were thus second cousins; and perhaps, but for inheriting the claims of both the children of Queen Margaret, James would never have become King of England; for the children of Margaret Douglas, by virtue of being native English, might have had a preference, by the laws of England, over a Scottish claimant with better hereditary right; a good reason, by the way, for the marriage of Mary and Darnley, though, after it turned out unhappily, it was exclaimed against, as the result of an imprudent attachment. In consequence of the failure of the male issue of Henry VIII., only son of Henry VII., Queen Mary became the heiress presumptive of Elizabeth, his last surviving daughter; and to her, accordingly, as she died without issue, James eventually succeeded.

led to that horrid transaction, or even of the incident itself, since they are already so well known. An allusion to the condition in which Mary was at the time, and the effect which it might be supposed to have upon her and her offspring, is alone necessary in this place. It would appear as one of the most flagrant proofs of the barbarism of even the best class of society in that age, that Darnley (who, it must be remembered, was educated in England) and his associates should have chosen to execute the murder of their victim in the Queen's presence, and while she was in such a peculiar condition. Entering, as it must be well recollected, her small supper-chamber, where she was sitting with Rizzio and one or two other persons, they bent their eyes upon him with a threatening expression, and, on his taking refuge behind his mistress, immediately proceeded to seize him. Mary, at various periods of her life, showed that she possessed an intrepidity of spirit not unworthy of her gallant lineage. But in that terrible scene, when her supper-table was overturned, the lights almost extinguished, and a bended pistol presented to her breast by one ruffian, while another stabbed the man who clung in despair to her person, she gave way to a sensation of alarm, which it appears she did not forget even after the birth of her child. It was her own fear, on that dreadful night, that her child could scarcely survive the agitation into which she had been thrown; and among the invectives which she launched against Lord Ruthven, the chief conspirator, one referred to the evils he might have thus brought upon his country. Fortunately, the misfortune which she apprehended, did not ensue. But it was always supposed,

by the contemporaries of her offspring, that he owed the weakness of his limbs, and his antipathy to the sight of arms, to the agitation into which his mother was thrown on the night of Rizzio's slaughter. *

The dissension consequent upon this event, betwixt Mary and Darnley, was partially stilled at the time when she was about to give birth to her child. On this account, when she retired to Edinburgh Castle, (which she chose to make the scene of her accouchment, in consideration of the security it afforded her), he was admitted to lodge in the same fortress, along with her approved friends, the Earls of Argyle, Atholl, Murray, and Mar. In a palace which she had recently built within that place of strength, and which still exhibits the initials of her own and her

* It was latterly insinuated against James, by the less prominent claimants of the English throne, that he was the child of Rizzio, and not of Darnley; a scandal to which some events of his mother's life, and the view which one party took of her character, gave a certain degree of countenance. So lately as the time of the Commonwealth, an enemy of the royal family ingeniously remarked, in allusion to his nickname of "the British Solomon," that he eminently deserved that title, seeing he was the son of *David the Fiddler*, and the father of Rehoboam (meaning *Charles*), who had the kingdom rent from him. But that Mary was guilty with a man described to have been so old and unamiable as Rizzio, is what no historian, save the malignant Buchanan, has ever imputed to her. Nor does chronology allow of such a supposition:—The marriage of the royal pair took place less than eleven months before the birth of their offspring; and it is quite inconceivable that the Queen could have commenced a guilty connection, so soon after her union to a man whom she warmly loved, and with whom, indeed, she had no quarrel till after she was far advanced in pregnancy.

husband's names, mingled in the loving shape of a cipher over the door-way, she was delivered of her son, between nine and ten in the morning of Wednesday, the 19th of June 1566. The room where this event took place is so extremely small, that it is yet the wonder of every one who sees it, how it could have afforded the proper accommodation. Indeed, there never perhaps was a King, even among those who have risen to their thrones from a plebeian rank, who was born in an apartment so limited in dimension, and so humble in appearance, as that in which the first monarch of Great Britain was ushered into the world. It measures no more than the length of two ordinary walking-canes in any direction; and it is somewhat irregular in shape. That Mary should have selected so narrow a room for her retirement under such circumstances, certainly gives a *curious* view either of her character, or of the manners of the age and country in which she lived. *

About two o'clock that afternoon, Lord Darnley came to visit the Queen, and expressed a desire to see the child. "My lord," said Mary, as her attendants presented their precious charge to his arms, "God has given you and me a son." Darnley stooped and kissed the child,

* Yet it is not perhaps so strange as that she should have permitted the guns of the castle, within a few yards of her bed, to be fired off immediately after the birth. They were fired as a matter of course, for the purpose of announcing the event to her subjects in the city below, and as a token of public congratulation. During the evening, bon-fires were lighted on the neighbouring hills; and as the intelligence spread throughout the country, it was received everywhere with similar testimonials of the popular satisfaction.

a blush mantling on his cheek, as the novel idea of paternity rushed to his mind. Mary then took her son into her arms, and, withdrawing a cloth which partially covered his face, said to her husband, "My lord, here I protest to God, and as I shall answer to him at the great day of judgment, this is your son, and no other man's son. He is indeed so much your son, that I only fear it will be the worse for him hereafter." Then turning to Sir William Stanley, Darnley's principal English servant, Mary added, "This is the son who, I hope, shall first unite the two kingdoms of Scotland and England." Sir William answered, "Why, madam! shall he succeed before your Majesty and his father?" "Alas!" Mary only answered, and the answer was expressive enough; "his father has broken to me." Darnley, who still stood near, heard this with pain. "Sweet madam!" said he, "is this your promise that you made, to forget and forgive all?"—"I have forgiven all," said the Queen; "but will never forget. What if Fawdonside's pistol had had shot? What would have become of him and me both! And what estate would you have been in? God only knows. But *we* may suspect." * "Madam," answered Darnley, "these things are all past." "Then," said the Queen, "let them go." †

* The Queen here alluded to the conduct of Andrew Ker of Faldownside at the death of Rizzio. He had presented a cocked pistol at her breast; and it is also recorded of him, that he separated Rizzio from her, by bending back his mid-finger, till he could no longer hold her waist for pain.

† This curious anedote is from an abridgement of a history of his own times, written by Lord Herries. The

Darnley would almost appear, from the circumstances of this interview, to have been a man of gentler and more tractable spirit, than is generally supposed of him. The blush which came upon his cheek as his child was presented to him, the kiss he imprinted on its lips, and his soft answer to the Queen's irritating remark regarding Rizzio's murder, are all traits of an amiable nature. Perhaps the following anecdote of him, now printed, like the preceding, for the first time, will deepen the favourable impression we thus receive of his character.

Darnley had an uncle in Clydesdale,—George Douglas of Todsholes, otherwise called 'of Parkhead'—a personage noted in Scottish history for having inflicted the first wound upon Rizzio, and who was generally known by the epithet of the Postulate of Aberbrothwick, from his having a prospect of eventually enjoying the temporalities of that rich abbacy. Though this man was only a natural son of the Earl of Angus, father to Darnley's mother, Darnley always styled him "Uncle;" and the royal pair occasionally visited him at Todsholes. One day, about the time when the quarrels of Mary and her husband first became publicly observed, Darnley was fishing on a lake near Todsholes, there being no other individual in the boat but Rizzio. Douglas had perceived, or been informed, that the Italian was the sole cause of his nephew's troubles; and, with that fatal disposition common to all Scotsmen at the time, by which the interests of a kinsman were held

original is in the Scots College of Douay, and the abridgement in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

superior to all other considerations, he made a sign to Darnley for permission to throw the Secretary into the water, where, in all probability, he would have instantly perished. Darnley, however, would not allow the Postulate to make this sacrifice of life for his sake, however little the risk of detection. No doubt, he was afterwards provoked, not only to consent to the murder of Rizzio, but also to take a part in it. Yet it is certainly so much in his favour, that, at a period a little earlier, he shrunk from sanctioning such a crime, although it might have then been committed much more conveniently, and without the least share of that risk of disagreeable consequences which eventually attended it. *

On the day after James's birth, the inhabitants, clergy, and nobility of Edinburgh, met in St Giles's, the principal church of the city, and returned thanks to the Almighty, for blessing them with an heir-apparent to the crown. The General Assembly of the church at the same time met, and agreed upon sending a message to the Queen, congratulating her upon her delivery, and requesting her to permit her offspring to be baptized and brought up in the Protestant faith. The person chosen to carry this message was Spottiswoode, the Superintendant of Lothian, a venerable churchman, the father of John Spottiswoode, the distinguished Archbishop of St Andrews. When Spottiswoode expressed the wishes of his brethren re-

* From a MS. memoir of the family of Dalgleish, which has been placed in my hands by Captain Stoddart, R. N. Bellvue Crescent, Edinburgh. It appears to have been written by a member of the family about the beginning of the last century.

garding the education of the prince, Mary smiled, and was silent. She otherwise received the ecclesiastical visitor very graciously. She commanded the child to be brought into her room, and shown to the churchman. He took the precious infant in his arms, and, falling upon his knees, uttered an earnest prayer, appropriate to the occasion; to which Mary listened with respectful attention. When done, he good humouredly asked the child to say Amen, as an expression of assent to what had been said; and it is reported that the child did utter a murmur, which Spottiswoode interpreted into the sound of the word required. Mary, amused at the pious warmth of the old man, conferred upon him the nickname of "Master Amen," which James, in his after years, is said to have continued to him, honouring him at the same time with a very friendly regard. *

* Spottiswoode's Church History. We are so much accustomed to associate the idea of Mary with that of grief, that the slightest anecdote of a facetious character, which can now be recorded respecting her, is apt to be appreciated above its deserts. From this conviction, rather than any thing else, I venture to present the following to the reader for the first time.

There is preserved in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, a manuscript entitled 'Rolment of Courts,' being an account of the laws, constitution, and antiquities of Scotland; the author of which, Habakkuk Bisset, is stated, by a note on the first leaf, (written in a different hand,) to have been endowed with his Christian name by Queen Mary. The father of Habakkuk was caterer to that Princess, and took the liberty, when on the way to have his child baptised, to ask her Majesty to assign a name for him. She being then about to go to mass, said she would open the Bible when in the church, and the first name which should strike her eye, she would assign it for a designation to the child. The first name she cast up was that of

Among the preparations which Mary had made for her accouchement, there was one of a very important nature. She had engaged her interim secretary, Mr James Melville, (afterwards Sir James) to be ready at a moment's notice to mount his horse and carry the tidings of her delivery to the Queen of England. She was now on friendly terms with Elizabeth; and as her prospects of succeeding to that sovereign were at the time keenly agitated by the friends of both, and had recently been a subject of correspondence between the parties themselves, she naturally felt anxious to communicate the earliest information regarding the event to the English Court. For this purpose, she had previously written and signed a letter to Elizabeth, complete in every respect, and ready to be despatched, except in the statement of the child's sex. For some time before, says Sir James Melville in his *Memoirs*, 'I lay within the Castle of Edinburgh, praying night and day for her Majesty's good and happy delivery of a fair son. This prayer being granted, I was the first who was thereof advertised by the Lady Boyne in her Majesty's name, to part with diligence the 19th of June, 1566, between ten and eleven in the morning. By twelve of the clock, I took horse, and was that night at Berwick. The fourth day thereafter I was at London, and did first meet with my brother Sir Robert, who that same night sent and advertised Secretary Cecil of my arrival, and of the birth of the Prince, desiring him to keep it quiet till my coming to court to show it myself un-

the prophet Habakkuk, which was accordingly bestowed upon the future author of the 'Rolment of Courts.'

to her Majesty, who was for the time at Greenwich, where her Majesty was in great mirth dancing after supper. But so soon as the Secretary Cecil whispered in her ear the news of the Prince's birth, all the mirth was laid aside for that night. All present marvelled whence proceeded such a change; for the Queen did sit down, putting her hand under her cheek, bursting out to some of her ladies, that the Queen of Scots was mother of a fair son, while *she* was but a barren stock. The next morning was appointed for me to get audience; at which time my brother and I went by water to Greenwich, and were met by some friends, who told us how sorrowful her Majesty was at my news; but that she had been advised to show a glad and cheerful countenance; which she did in her best apparel, saying, that the joyful news of the Queen her sister's delivery of a fair son, which I had sent her by Secretary Cecil, had recovered her out of a heavy sickness which she had been under for fifteen days. Therefore, she welcomed me with a merry volt, and thanked me for the diligence I had used in hasting to give her that welcome intelligence. All this she had said before I delivered to her my letter of credence. After that she had read it, I declared how that the Queen had hasted me towards her Majesty, as one whom she knew, of all her friends, would be most joyful of the glad news of her delivery, albeit dear bought with the peril of her life, she being so sore handled that she wished she had never been married. This I said by the way, to give her a little scare from marriage; for so my brother had counselled me, because sometimes she boasted [threatened] to marry the Archduke

Charles of Austria, when any man pressed her to name a second person. Then I requested her Majesty to be a gossip to the Queen, to which she gladly condescended. Your Majesty, said I, will now have a fair occasion to see the Queen, whereof I have heard your Majesty so oft desirous. Whereat she smiled, saying, She wished that her estate and affairs might permit her; in the mean time, she promised to send both honourable lords and ladies to supply her room.'

The great mind of Elizabeth is here found pining at her own hopelessness of issue, and bitterly grudging the advantage which the Queen of Scots derived from her infant heir as a claimant of the English throne. She had previously found great difficulty in repressing the claims of Mary to be declared her heir, urged as these claims were by a large party of her subjects; and she now contemplated with much vexation the strong additional claim which the Scottish Queen must thus have upon the affections of the English people.

Mary remained in Edinburgh Castle, with her son, till the beginning of August, when she took shipping at Newhaven, and sailed up the Firth of Forth to Alloa, the seat of her trusty friend the Earl of Mar. Here she lived for a week or more, during which Monsieur Malvoisin came to her, as ambassador from the King of France, to congratulate her on the birth of her son; an event which had given that monarch the greatest joy, as well as all the other Catholic sovereigns of Europe, tending as it did to fortify her pretensions to the English crown against Elizabeth. Malvoisin exerted himself at Alloa to reconcile her to Lord Darnley, and was so successful in his efforts, as

to induce them to spend two nights together. From Alloa, the whole court proceeded to Meggat in Tweeddale, to enjoy the recreation of hunting; on which expedition Darnley accompanied the Queen, along with Bothwell, Murray, and others, who had offended her Majesty by their concern in Rizzio's murder, but to whom, as to Darnley, she had recently been in a great measure reconciled.

Knox and Buchanan, whom religious prejudices induced to become the enemies and calumniators of this ill-starred princess, represent her conduct at this time as flagitious to the last degree. In particular, the latter writer accuses her of having already commenced a criminal correspondence with the Earl of Bothwell. It is not the province of the present writer to become the defender of Mary Stuart; although he believes that much might yet be done to erase the impressions which those able but unjust men have made upon the public mind regarding her conduct. It may be proper, however, for the respectability of the subject of this memoir, to remind the reader, that the whole of the scandals which Buchanan has detailed in regard to this particular era of her life, are disproved by State documents, disclosed only to the present generation. * The celebrated story, for instance, of her journey to visit Bothwell at the Hermitage Castle, upon which Buchanan lays so much stress, is now found to have been a very simple diplomatic transaction, and to have occurred quite as a matter of course in public business.

The baptism of the young prince took place at

* In the elaborate and valuable work of Mr George Chalmers.

Stirling, on the 17th of December, in a style of parade and magnificence, rather suited to the importance of the infant as heir-presumptive to the crown of England, than to his character as the son of the Queen of Scots. Mary had, at the very first, requested Queen Elizabeth to stand as sponsor or gossip; and she had at the same time taken care to invite ambassadors from all the friendly powers abroad to be present at the ceremony. Before the appointed day, the Earl of Bedford arrived, with a retinue of eighty gentlemen on horseback, as ambassador from Elizabeth, bringing with him a font of gold to be employed in the ceremony, as a present from his mistress to Queen Mary. The accurate Stowe informs us, that this grand piece of plate cost the sum of one thousand and forty-three pounds nineteen shillings; while a more homely Scottish chronicler of the day has recorded, that it was 'twa stane wecht.' * Large as it was, however, Elizabeth entertained apprehensions that it would be too small to contain the person of the infant prince; and she had given Bedford instructions, among graver matters, 'to say pleasantly that it was made as soon as we heard of the Prince's birth, and then 'twas big enough for him; but now he, being grown, is too big for it; therefore it may be better used for the *next child*, provided it be christened before it outgrows the font.' † The Earl also brought a ring, 'estimate worth ane hundreth merks,' to be presented to the Countess of Argyle, Mary's natural sister, and a Catholic,

* Johnston's History of Scotland, M.S., Advocates' Library.

† Instructions, apud Keith's History, p. 356, 357.

whom Elizabeth had appointed to represent her as gossip at the baptism. * Nearly about the same time arrived the Count de Brienne, as ambassador from the King of France. Mary also expected an envoy from the Duke of Savoy; but, though she postponed the ceremony for two days, to allow him time to come forward, he arrived too late. †

The older historians, ever more attentive to the trappings of history than to its *morale*, have supplied us with a most minute account of the baptism; part of which, as in some measure illustrative of the manners, and also the politics of the time, may here be presented anew. The prince, in the first place, was borne out of the chamber he occupied in Stirling Castle, to the adjacent royal chapel, by the French ambassador, the Countess of Argyle, and Monsieur Le Croc, (a French resident, who acted on this occasion in place of the lagging deputy of the Duke of Savoy). After these proceeded the Earl of Atholl, bearing 'ane gret serge of war,' the Earl of Eglintoune bearing 'the salt-fat,' Lord Sempill bearing 'the cude,' and Lord Ross 'the basin and ewer,' which were to be employed in the ceremony. ‡ A multitude of nobles and gentlemen followed, each bearing in his hand a 'large pricket of wax;' the time requiring such illumination, as it was at five in the after-

* Johnston's MS. History.

† It may be interesting to local antiquaries to know, that the English ambassador, on his arrival at Edinburgh, lodged in the Duke of Chatelerault's house, in the Kirk of Field Wynd, where the College now stands; and that the French ambassador was bestowed in 'Henry Kinloch's Lodging in the Canongate.'—*Johnston's MS. History.*

‡ Johnston's MS. History.

noon that the solemnity commenced. At the entry of the chapel, all who had scruples of conscience on account of the Catholic nature of the ceremony, withdrew from the procession; among which number were the English ambassador and his train, who had orders to that effect from their mistress. A much more important person than these failed to countenance the baptism with his presence. This was Darnley. The dissensions between him and the Queen having now broken out again as violently as ever, he was absent, either on account of his own obstinate folly, or in consequence of precautions which Mary had taken to that effect, for the sake of decent appearances. *

The ceremony was performed by John Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrew's, a prelate whose fate it was, only five years after, to be hanged upon the neighbouring bridge over the Forth, a victim to the fierce party-spirit which then tore the bowels of the nation. On the present occasion, in splendid unconsciousness of his fate, Hamilton appeared in full pontificals, staff, mitre, and crosier, and was assisted by the Bishops of Dunkeld, Dunblane, and Ross, with a multitude of humbler officials, all of them in their appropriate attire. He performed the whole of the ceremonies of the sacrament of baptism, in exact conformity to the custom of the Romish church, except 'the spittle,' which was omitted at the request of the Queen. After the solemnity, the child's name and titles were thrice proclaimed by the heralds, under sound of trumpet: 'Charles James, James Charles,

* He remained, during the time of the ceremony, in the lodging of the Sub-dean of the Chapel Royal, within the town of Stirling.—*Johnston's MS. History.*

Prince and Steward of Scotland, Duke of Rothsay, Earl of Carrick, Lord of the Isles, and Baron of Renfrew.' * The whole ceremony was concluded with 'singing and playing of organs.' †

'This done, they passed to the great hall to the supper, quhereat sat the Queenis grace; at the mid-buird the French ambassadour; at the rycht hand the English ambassadour; at the left hand Monsieur Le Croc. And to the Queenis Majesty the Earl of Huntlie was carver, the Earl of Murray cupper, and the Earl of Bothwell sewer; to the French ambassador, the Earl of Mar carver, the Earl of Cassilis cupper, and the Earl of Athole sewer; to the English ambassador, the Earl of Eglingtoune carver, the Earl of Rothes cupper, and the Earl of Crawford sewer; to the Duke of Savoy's ambassadour (*pro-ambassador*), the Master of Maxwell carver, the Lord Boyd cupper, and the Lord Levingston sewer. The ordour of the in-bringing of the mess was, the heraulds, trumpettis, and messengers, with three masters of household, in rank; namely, the Laird of Finlater in the middis, Seignor Francis de Bastian at the rycht hand, and Gilbert Balfour at the left. After them came George Lord Seyton alone; and after him came the Earl of Argyle alone; and ilk ane of them ane fare whyte stalf in his hand. And the rest of the lords, baronis, and gentlemen bure coursses in great abundance, and weill ordourit. And, after gret dancing and playing, al partit to thair lodgings.' ‡

* Johnston's MS. Hist.

† Keith. 360. The principal name, James, was in honour of the Queen's father. James V. The second was in honour of Charles IX. King of France.

‡ Johnston's MS. Hist.

Such is the report of one simple annalist. 'It is reportit' says another, † 'by persons worthie of credit, that that day the Prince was baptized, there was sitting in the entrie of the Castle, ane puir man asking alms, having a young child on his knee, whose head was so great that the body of the child could scarce bear it up; which, when a gentleman perceived, he could not defend himself from tears, for fear of the evil he judged to be portended.' This affords a curious view of the state of things in Scotland at that time; princely revels within doors, and at the very threshold a scene of poverty and wretchedness appalling to the senses.

Two days after the baptism, the Queen entertained her court and foreign guests at a grand banquet, which was preceded by an exhibition of fireworks in Stirling churchyard. During the banquet, an amusing quarrel arose between the French and English. It appears, that the various representatives of these antagonist nations beheld each other, on the present ocassion, with a good deal of their accustomed suspicion and hatred. The French, for one thing, thought the English more favoured by the Queen than was their due, and that they themselves were too little favoured: it appeared to them that her Majesty was disposed to pay less court to her old and assured friends of France, than to her new and less secure allies of England. It so happened, that the amusements of the evening were chiefly conducted by the Queen's French servant, de Bastian; a name disagreeably memorable in her history, as it was on his marriage night

† Calderwood's Church History, MS. Ad. Lib. vol. iii. p. 35.

that Darnley was murdered. According to the grotesque taste of that age, the table containing the meat was moved into the hall by concealed machinery, preceded by a number of men dressed like satyrs, and accompanied by 'musicians, clothed like maids, and playing on all sorts of instruments.' The business of the satyrs was to make way for the advancing table through the guests assembled in the hall. It pleased them, however, to perform an extra-official duty, by seizing their tails behind, and wagging them in the faces of the crowd. 'The long-tailed English' was an epithet of contempt applicable to that nation from the days of King David the Second, when we know it was applied to a party of them by Black Agnes, at the siege of Dunbar. Of course, it was natural for them, on the present occasion, to conceive that the ludicrous gesture of the satyrs was a studied insult devised against them by the French master of ceremonies; and under this impression, the greater part of them were foolish enough to express their resentment, by sitting down upon the floor behind the table, with their backs turned to the festive scene. Mr Hatton, one of the principal men among them, even went the length of telling Sir James Melville, that, but for the Queen's presence, he would have "put his dagger into the heart of that knave De Bastian." Mary, who was sitting at the time in conversation with the Earl of Bedford, turned about on hearing the tumult; but it cost both her and the Earl a good deal of pains to reassure the English, and compose the mighty quarrel which distracted the assemblage. *

* Sir James Melvill's Memoirs, 151.

Having soon after this dismissed the foreign ambassadors, Mary remained with her son at Stirling till the 13th of January, when she removed with him to Edinburgh. Darnley had in the meantime gone, in a very discontented state of mind, to visit his father in Glasgow, where the small-pox was then raging. This unhappy young man—for unhappy he may well be called, though unfortunate in nothing but his mental imbecility—caught the contagion immediately after his arrival at Glasgow. The Queen no sooner heard of his illness, than she sent her physician to attend him. Towards the end of the month, she went herself to visit him at Glasgow; his extreme distress having once more induced her to forgive him. It was then determined that he should be brought to Edinburgh, for change of air, and thither he was accordingly conveyed in a chariot or litter, about the end of January. Having been placed in the house of the Provost of the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields, which was properly fitted up for his reception, he lay in a convalescent state, attended with due care by Mary, till the 10th of February, when, in consequence of a conspiracy entered into for that effect, by the Earl of Murray, the Secretary Maitland, and other flagitious men, he was assassinated in a manner too well known to require particular description here.

George Buchanan, who belonged to the party of the conspirators, has relieved them of the whole blame of this infamous transaction, and thrown it upon the Queen. His tale is a plausible one; and as it appeared in a work which continued, for two centuries, to be the most popular history of the country, and which appeals, moreover, to the

religious prejudices of the people, it has taken deep root in the public mind. Unfortunately, however, for his reputation, and that of his friends, the whole story has been lately proved, by reference to original and unerring documents, to have been not only untrue, but impossible. The explanation of the mystery of Darnley's murder, is, that it was projected by the men whose names are mentioned in the last paragraph, and executed by their instrument the Earl of Bothwell. Mary, throughout all the subsequent transactions of her life, was the victim of these men, and of one other grand leader of the Protestant interest, Elizabeth Queen of England.

The murder of Darnley was but a part of the conspiracy which had been formed against the Queen. The chief part was what came afterwards, her abduction by Bothwell, and the infamy which they contrived to throw upon her on that account. In one word, it was calculated by these designing men, that, if she could be prevailed upon to marry the supposed murderer of her husband, the popular odium would be so strong against her, that there would then be little difficulty in transferring the government into their own hands. The whole plot was developed exactly in the manner which had been concluded on.

About the 20th of March, when James was nine months old, he was transferred back from Edinburgh to Stirling Castle, and there placed for his education under the tutelage of John Earl of Mar, a nobleman in whose family the custody of the infants of the royal family had almost become hereditary. Mary saw him there *for the last time* on the 23d of April. In returning, next day, from

Stirling Castle towards Edinburgh, she was seized by Bothwell at Cramond Bridge, and hurried off to his impregnable fortress of Dunbar. On the 15th of May, she was induced, partly by the solicitations of Bothwell, partly by the recommendation of the members of the conspiracy, and partly by a wish to repair her character as a matron, to marry this infamous nobleman; of whose concern in the assassination of her husband, be it remarked, she was in all probability ignorant, or at least incredulous; for, at that time, it was only suspected by the people that he was guilty, and, of all persons in the realm, she was the least likely to be acquainted with the popular rumours. The marriage had scarcely been transacted three days, when, in prosecution of the conspiracy, her enemies assembled with their vassals, and made a hostile movement against her. She was now completely in their toils. Having gathered a considerable force at Dunbar, she moved forward on the 15th of June to Carbery, near Musselburgh, where the conspirators met her with nearly an equal force. The two armies lay opposite to each other during the whole of a long summer day, while a proposal was agitated by both to settle the matter in dispute, by a single combat betwixt Bothwell and some champion among the conspirators. At length, as evening declined, Mary was induced, by the clemency of her disposition, and the fair professions of her enemies, to commit her person into their custody, while Bothwell retired to Dunbar, and her army was dissolved.

In making this resignation of her person, it is evident that the unfortunate Queen supposed herself only changing the protection of Bothwell for

that of another party; which was quite a natural and proper transaction in an age when royalty could only be upheld by an association of nobles, or by one leading man among them. Though the promises of the rebels were to this effect, their intentions were in reality very different. They had no sooner got the Queen into their hands, than they began to treat her as a captive criminal. Favoured in their base designs by the prejudices of the populace, they led her to Edinburgh with every circumstance of degradation. The crowd which collected in the streets as she passed through them, was so great, that she and her guards could only move one after another in a string; and thus she was closely environed by a rude mob, who assailed her with a thousand varied insults. One of the plans taken by the party to inflame the people against her, was the exhibition of a standard, containing a view of Darnley's body, lying under a tree, with the infant prince on his knees, uttering the words, "Judge and avenge my cause, Oh Lord!" This was repeatedly presented to her eyes. Horror-struck at her situation, the unhappy Queen shed abundance of tears; and thus, as the day was exceedingly hot and dusty, her face at length became begrimed to such a degree, as to be scarcely recognisable. To increase the ridicule of her appearance, her captors obliged her to go through the procession, without changing the short and miry little riding-habit which she had worn in the fields, for any more dignified garment. They enclosed her for the night, without attendance of any sort, in a small apartment of the house of the provost; where, next morning, she was seen at a window, using the most violent gestures which ex-

treme grief can suggest, and with no covering to the upper part of her body, but the wild tresses, which, in her distraction, she had permitted to escape from their usual restraint. She spent the whole of the 16th of June in this situation, her ears regaled, during a part of it, with the noise of a skirmish which took place in the street betwixt the retainers of two hostile nobles, and her mind haunted with the most appalling fears regarding her destination. At length, after a confinement of two-and-twenty hours, she was taken forth about eleven o'clock at night, and hurried away to the little islet fortress of Lochleven, where she was put under the charge of Sir Robert Douglas; who, being related to Morton, and connected by marriage with Murray, seemed the most trusty jailor that could be selected.

It is one of the most grievous discounts from royalty, that the relations which give to private life its sweetest grace and best enjoyments, are, in that loftier station, often sacrificed to political calculations. Had Mary been born in a humble sphere of life, her child would have probably been a solace to her above all others; and scarcely any contingency could have occurred to render him a source of misfortune or regret. But in the high place which she was ordained to fill in society, her child was rendered the means of danger and annoyance to her, even before he entered the world; and he no sooner saw the light, and it was proclaimed, as the simple language of scripture expresses it, 'that a man child was born,' than he became unconsciously her most conspicuous enemy. It was an obvious idea, on the part of the no-

bles who deposed Mary, to take her infant under their protection, and make him their nominal sovereign; for not only was he the next heir to the crown, and the person who, at any rate, must have eventually succeeded, but his long minority promised them a duration of their ill-acquired power, and they could calculate upon educating him as they pleased. Accordingly, a month had scarcely elapsed after the incarceration of the Queen, when a deputation of the insurgents appeared before her in her prison, and, by dint of threats, and personal violence, compelled her to sign a deed resigning the sovereignty into the hands of her son. Fortified by this document, they proceeded to Stirling; and, on the 29th of July, when James was only thirteen months and ten days old, he was crowned and proclaimed as King James the Sixth. The Earl of Murray was then absent in France; but he returned, about ten days after the coronation, and was almost immediately appointed to the office of Regent. The character of Murray is well known—righteous and amiable to all who did not interfere with his ambitious views, but, in the prosecution of these, cruel and unprincipled; a man who, if he had not had the good fortune to profess and advance the Protestant faith—or rather, if that had not been his best tactics—for nobody in his senses could suppose such a man sincere—would have been recorded by history as a usurper and a parricide.

In the succeeding May, by the assistance of the brother of her keeper, Mary escaped from Lochleven, and immediately succeeded in raising an army among the numerous vassals of the family of Hamil-

ted; but unfortunately, engaging in a rash rencontre with the troops of the Earl of Murray, at Langside, near Glasgow, she was defeated, and compelled to take to flight. Seeing no refuge for herself in Scotland, she now adopted the resolution of flying to claim the protection of the Queen of England, which country she entered, for that purpose, within the week of her defeat. Her seizure, her imprisonment, and her eventual destruction by that princess, are facts which need not here be given in detail.

By the restraint imposed upon Mary in England, the Earl of Murray was confirmed in his regency, with no other drawback to his power, than the occasional ebullitions of the Queen's party, and the submission which he was obliged to pay to Elizabeth, who, from the influence she possessed over the Protestant interest in Scotland, might almost be termed his constituent. His government is generally allowed to have been mild and conciliating; but he happened to give mortal offence to a gentleman of the name of Hamilton, one of the family which formed the principal part of the faction opposed to him. That person, urged by private resentment to undertake a duty which his friends persuaded him to think public, deliberately shot the Regent with a harquebuss, from the window of a house in Linlithgow, January 23, 1569–70, after he had governed little more than two years. The Scottish parliament then selected Matthew Earl of Lennox, the father of Darnley, and grandfather of the infant King, to act as Regent in his place. Lennox was a feeble, though by no means a bad man; and his accession to an office which it required all the talents and vigour

of Murray to execute properly, was the signal for a renewed attempt in favour of the Queen. Her friends now began a struggle with her enemies, distinguished by a peculiar ferocity, and a total want of all those amenities which in general tend to smooth the aspect of civil war. The Castles of Dumbarton and Edinburgh, besides others belonging to the Hamiltons in Clydesdale, still held out for Mary. Indeed, the capital itself was entirely in the hands of the Queen's party; and to increase her hopes, the castle of that city was now held for her by Kirkaldy of Grange and Maitland of Lethington, two men of the greatest importance, and who had till lately been her enemies. Stirling, the second fortress of the kingdom, naturally became the head-quarters of the King's party, who also, on one occasion, established themselves in the Canongate, one of the fauxbourgs of Edinburgh, and there held a parliament in opposition to one which was assembled in the name of Mary within the city. So keen did this struggle at length become, that both parties began to hang all prisoners who fell into their hands, while the two rival parliaments fulminated attainders against each other, with a regularity of discharge almost equal to that which was exemplified by the guns of the castle, and those of the batteries which assailed it.

The young King, in the mean time, grew up under the care of his faithful and affectionate governor the Earl of Mar, and that of his equally faithful and affectionate nurse the Countess. One anecdote of his infancy has been preserved, with ludicrous care, by the contemporary historians.

The Regent Lennox having called a parliament, otherwise a meeting of his own party, at Stirling,

on the 28th of August 1571, the baby King was conducted thither on horseback, in royal robes, to preside over the assembly. It was in the town-house of Stirling that this parliament was held; and the accommodations of the place had probably been better before the commencement of these ruinous troubles. The *regalia* carried before James on this occasion, and placed on the table at which he sat, were of brass over-gilt, because the real symbols of royalty were kept in Edinburgh Castle, which was in the hands of his mother's party. The house, however, was in a condition still less honourable to the character of a Scottish parliament, there being a large hole in its roof. James, who was now five years of age, was struck at once by the multitude of the assemblage around him, and by the breach which he observed over his head; and he asked his governor, what matter it was which he was now engaged in? Being informed that it was the parliament, he remarked, with infantine simplicity, "I think there be ane hole in the parliament." *

There was nothing *but* infantine simplicity in the expression used by the young monarch. Yet the events of the subsequent week were such as to elevate it, in the estimation of the country, into something like a prophecy. Before that brief space had elapsed, a real and very grievous breach was made in the public body over which the King had presided. It was in manner as follows:—

* By another version of the story, the hole was not in the roof of the hall, but in the 'cloth of estate' which covered the table; and James made the remark, as he reached forth his hand to manipulate the edges of the torn drapery.

Kirkaldy, the governor of Edinburgh Castle, being informed that the King's friends at Stirling lay in such security as not even to keep a watch, projected an enterprise, by which he hoped to give them a complete surprise. On the evening of the 2nd of September, having seized all the horses which appeared that day in the Edinburgh market, he mounted two hundred of his best soldiers; to which number adding three hundred of his best foot, he placed the whole under the direction of Captain George Bell, a native of Stirling, who undertook, from his local knowledge, to lead them to their prey. The men were chiefly Borderers, under the command of the Laird of Buccleuch; and, to preserve the secret, it was given out that the enterprise was destined for Jedburgh, to compose some differences which had lately sprung up betwixt the citizens of that town and their powerful neighbour, the Laird of Ferniehirst. They left Edinburgh at night-fall, by the way towards Jedburgh; but as soon as they got to a little distance, they turned abruptly to the west, and marched with the utmost haste to Stirling. The foot were mounted behind the cavalry for the greater expedition; while such as could not be thus accommodated, seized horses for themselves from the country people as they marched along. Bell led them into the silent streets of Stirling, a little after midnight, not so much as a dog barking at them as they passed. He immediately proceeded to denote to his followers the houses occupied by individuals of distinction; and, a guard being placed upon each, the whole were simultaneously attacked. They had previously agitated among themselves the propriety of killing all the men of rank with-

out exception; but although Lord Claud Hamilton, brother to the late Archbishop of St Andrews, advocated this unsparing measure, as a proper tribute to the manes of his kinsman, it was finally settled, that as many as possible should be taken prisoners, and brought away alive. The attack took place to the cry of, "Think on the Archbishop of St Andrews;" and in a few minutes, almost every man of name in the town was seized, brought out, mounted behind a trooper, and made ready to march to Edinburgh. Lennox attempted to defend himself; but, the assailants pretending that they had placed some barrels of gunpowder beneath his lodging, which they threatened to blow up, he was persuaded to yield, on a promise of his life. Morton alone stood out; and his obstinacy became the salvation of his party. The assailants were now only waiting for his surrender, before they should leave the town. Every other enemy was in custody; every horse was brought out of the stables by the Borderers: these redoubted heroes had even got a considerable quantity of valuable moveables out of the merchants' shops, which they were determined to carry away, as their own most natural share of the profits of the enterprise; when a little accident proved the ruin of the whole 'raid,' hitherto so well conducted, and so completely successful. There was a large house, belonging to the Earl of Mar, which commanded the whole length of the principal street, and upon which they had neglected to place a guard, for the simple reason that it was uninhabited, and indeed only in the process of building. Into this edifice Mar led a party of sixteen of his own soldiers, whom he had brought down from

the castle, on learning what was going on in the town. They having fired one effective volley from their *harquebusses of found*, the invading party was completely counter-surprised, and at once thrown into the utmost confusion. Without waiting a moment to ascertain the strength of the rescuing party, they thronged pell-mell out at the narrow passage which leads from the principal street, where many were overwhelmed in the press, and trodden to death under foot. Mar's party, pouring one by one from a narrow door-way of the unfinished building, now attacked them in rear, and were soon joined by others, who escaped from their captors. A considerable number of the leading men among the Queen's party surrendered at discretion to the very persons who had been committed to their charge, and mounted behind them as prisoners, but a few minutes before. In the midst of the confusion, a wretch of the name of Calder deliberately shot the Regent with his pistol, from a wish to make the enterprise not altogether ineffectual; and David Spens of Ormiston, who had the custody of this important personage, was at the same time struck down by one of his own party, for attempting to defend his charge. The Queen's faction at last evacuated the town, with the loss of thirty-eight men; but it is calculated that they would have suffered much more, if the Borderers had left any horses to the enemy, on which to continue the pursuit.

The unfortunate Regent was carried to Stirling Castle in a dying state, remarking, as he went, that "all was well, if *the babe* was well;" by which he meant the King. He made a pious end next day, recommending the young sovereign to

Almighty protection, and desiring those who were about him to bear his love "to his wife Meg;" for by that familiar name he always designated the grand-daughter of Henry VII., and grandmother of King James VI.

This singular enterprise caused the common people to designate the parliament during which it took place, "the Black Parliament;" as also to interpret the childish observation of the King regarding the ceiling of the Parliament house, into a prophecy.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION—EARLY YOUTH—MORTON'S REGENCY—ASCENDENCY OF THE FAVOURITES LENNOX AND ARRAN—EXECUTION OF MORTON.

1571—1580.

JAMES was unfortunate in all the circumstances of his early years, even in those in which men of all stations are commonly alike fortunate. We learn from Dr Mayerne, his physician in latter life, * that he had a drunkard for a wet nurse, from whose vitiated milk, although weaned within twelve months, he contracted a feeble constitution of body, which rendered him unable to walk till his sixth year—though perhaps this was partly the result, as already stated, of the fright which his mother received before he was born. His whole organization was imperfect and peculiar: he inherited, for instance, from his grandfather James V., and his mother Mary, a certain narrowness of jaws, which rendered swallowing difficult.

Perhaps, however, he was not more unfortunate in any thing than in his preceptor, the celebrated Buchanan. As the greatest scholar of his age, and one who was perfectly eligible in the score of politics and religion, this personage naturally oc-

* Ellis's Letters, 2d ser. iii. 199.

carried to James's guardians, as one every way worthy of becoming his tutor. He was, therefore, called away from his office of Principal of the University of St Andrews, in order to undertake the management of the royal education at Stirling.

If the mere possession of vast classical learning, or a turn for writing elegant Latin, could have qualified any man for assuming this important place, Buchanan was certainly qualified. It may be questioned, however, if he possessed the real requisites of the office. In the very first place, his age, advanced towards seventy, was a serious disqualification, allied as it was to the still more serious one of a broken temper—the natural result of a long life of literary hardship and disappointment—and the peculiar habits which must always more or less characterize solitary old age. Besides, the mere possession of learning does not imply the faculty of teaching; and Buchanan had all his life been a learner, not a teacher. His republican principles, and the sincere hatred which he entertained for kings, although qualities that would appear excellent to his constituents and to a large modern party, surely did not add to his powers of commanding the affections, and fixing the attention of a princely pupil. Nor was he the better qualified for taking this endearing place in relation to the son, that he was already the enemy, and designed to become the maligner, of the mother. There was, to say the least of it, a great deal of bad taste displayed by the regency, in fixing upon the friend of the Earl of Murray for the preceptor of the son of Mary. A less learned and younger man, one of more gentle temper, and neutral in regard to the late troubles, would surely,

if otherwise qualified for the office, have been better than this ungracious anchorite, whose only recommendation, after all, in the eyes of his constituents, was, that he was essentially their own creature.

Buchanan, however, was not single in his charge. He was only at the head of other three instructors, Mr Peter Young, and the titular Abbots of Cambuskenneth and Dryburgh, both of which last were Erskines, of the family of Mar. These men are stated, by various writers friendly to Buchanan, to have formed a mean contrast, in their courtly and gentle treatment of their pupil, to the stern demeanour of their superior. But this assertion is only of a piece with the general blindness of would-be reformers, whose besetting fault it is to theorise on high principles, without allowing for the deficiencies of the materials on which they have to work. James was a child, and not a man; and as it was to be supposed that he possessed the same passions, and was characterised by the same imperfections as most boys, it was necessary to employ expedients of the most practical kind. To teach children, one must himself 'become as a little child.' The mere exhibition of knowledge before the eyes of young people, will not make them learn. The simple statement of rules will fail to impress them. They must be reasoned with. Their faculties, such as they are, must be interested. Knowledge must be presented to them, not in masses, nor in its primitive shape; it must be rendered a pulp, and administered in mouthfuls. Above all, it must not be presented with such a frown as to make them fear it to be poison, instead of salutary diet. Now, the true difference between Buchanan and

his associates was, that the former rendered his instructions unpalatable, at once by the rigour of discipline which accompanied them, and his failing to reduce them into a sufficiently practical shape; while the others, with less distinction in learning, but more common sense, accommodated themselves and their knowledge to the character of their pupil, and, perhaps showing him less, communicated more. James himself seems to have long remembered Buchanan with a feeling of horror. He used to say of one of his English courtiers, in the latter part of his life, that he never could help trembling at his approach, he brought him so much in mind of his "pedagogue."* On the other hand, Mr Peter Young continued ever after a favourite with the monarch, was employed by him in foreign embassies, honoured with a pension, and eventually knighted.

Some change must have taken place in James's domestic circumstances after the death of Lennox, when his governor, the Earl of Mar, was selected by the nobles of his party to be Regent; an office which caused his Lordship to reside chiefly in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, in order to carry on the siege of the Castle. Mar was one of the purest characters of that dreadful time, and one of the most peaceable. He endeavoured, by all means, to procure a cessation of arms between the King's and Queen's factions; but he was not successful. After a turbulent government of little more than a year, he died on the 18th of October 1573, it was supposed of a broken heart. The Earl of Morton was chosen to succeed him.

* Osborn's Advice to a Son, 19.

One of the first acts of Morton's government, was an ordinance 'for continuing the King in the Castle of Stirling, under the care of the widow of the late Earl of Mar, *as to his mouth*, and the ordering of his person; but to continue under his present pedagogues; and the Castle to be kept in the name of the Earl of Mar.'*

The new Earl of Mar was a boy of eleven years at the time of his father's death; consequently, he was four years older than the King. Notwithstanding this disparity of age, which was considerable at such a period of life, the two boys were intimate friends. James, who had all his life a habit of conferring nick-names on those about him, gave young Mar the epithet of *the Sloven*, which was afterwards changed into the unintelligible one of *Jock o' Shlaitts*. Their sports, which they performed in company, are stated to have been bows and arrows, the foot-ball, catch-pole or tennis, *schule-the-brod* (shovel-board), billiards, and *call-the-guse*. James also played a good deal at cards, when a little further advanced in life; but he never was addicted to dice.

His studies, as the minutely inquiring Chalmers has shown, were commenced at a very early period of his life. In the books of the Treasurer of Scotland, under the date of May 1573, when he was only finishing his seventh year, there is a charge of 3*l.* 10s. 'for nine paper buikis to the King.' In the ensuing October, there is a charge of 8*l.* 8s. to Peter Young, 'for certane buikis to his Grace.' In February 1573–4, when seven and a half years old, 13*l.* 12s. is paid for repairing

* Chalmers's Life of Queen Mary, i. 394.

the King's *studie*, for making a new window, and other necessaries.*

These various matters certainly indicate an advancement in learning beyond what might have been expected from his years. His paper books must have been used for the writing of themes in translation from Latin. Books and a study under eight years, are also wonders in their way. Yet it is probable, that all the learning he had then acquired was of a kind but little suited to his understanding or to his necessities. James Melville, for instance, records in his Diary, that, on visiting Stirling, in October 1574 (when James was eight and a quarter), he beheld in his Majesty 'the sweetest sight in Europe for extraordinary gifts of ingyne, judgment, memory, and language.' —'I heard him discourse,' says this writer, 'walking up and down, in the auld Lady Mar's hand, *of knawledge and ignorance*, to my great marvel and astonishment.' Surely any disquisition which such a young person could utter on the subject of knowledge and ignorance, must have been perfectly alien to his own mind—must have been placed there *en masse* by his instructors, and only delivered by rote.

Two or three anecdotes of James's school-boy days are related by Dr Irving, in his Life of Buchanan, on the credit of Dr Mackenzie, author of the Lives of Scottish Writers. 'The King having caught a fancy for a tame sparrow, which belonged to his playfellow, the Master (afterwards Earl) of Mar, solicited him without effect to transfer his right; and in endeavouring to wrest it

* Life of Queen Mary, i. 395.

out of his hand, he deprived the poor little animal of life. Erskine having raised due lamentation for its untimely fate, the circumstances were reported to Buchanan; who lent his young sovereign a box on the ear, and admonished him that he was himself a true bird of the bloody nest to which he belonged.

'A theme, which had one day been prescribed to the royal pupil, was the conspiracy of the Earl of Angus and other noblemen during the reign of James the Third. After dinner he was diverting himself with Mar; and, as Buchanan, who in the meantime was intent on reading, found himself annoyed by their obstreporous mirth, he requested the King to desist; but as no attention was paid to the suggestion, he threatened to accompany his next suggestion with something more formidable than words. James, whose ear had been tickled by the quaint application of the apologue mentioned in the theme, replied that he would be glad to see who would *bell the cat.* His venerable preceptor, who might have pardoned the remark, was perhaps offended with the mode in which it was uttered: he threw aside his book with indignation, and bestowed upon the delinquent that species of scholastic discipline which is deemed most ignominious. The Countess of Mar, being attracted by the wailing which ensued, hastened to the scene of his disgrace; and, taking the precious deposit in her arms, she demanded of Buchanan, how he presumed to lay his hand on the Lord's anointed.' To this interrogation he is said to have replied in a very unceremonious antithesis, which does not admit, in this delicate age, of the distinct specification which it received in the less scrupulous days of Dr Mac-

kenzie. 'A man,' concludes Dr Irving, 'who was no stranger to polished society, can hardly be suspected of such unpoliteness to a lady; unless we suppose her to have assumed a degree of insolence which rendered it expedient to convince her, by an overwhelming proof, that he disowned her authority.'

'One of the earliest propensities which James discovered,' says Dr Irving at another place, 'was an excessive attachment to favourites; and this weakness, which ought to have been abandoned with the other characteristics of childhood, continued to retain its ascendancy during every stage of his life. His facility of complying with every request alarmed the prophetic sagacity of Buchanan. On the authority of the poet's nephew, Chytræus has recorded a ludicrous expedient which he adopted for the purpose of correcting his pupil's conduct. He presented the young king with two papers, which he requested him to sign; and James, after having slightly interrogated him respecting their contents, readily appended his signature to each, without the precaution of even a cursory perusal. One of them was a formal transference of the royal authority for the term of fifteen days. When Buchanan had quitted the royal presence, one of the courtiers accosted him with his usual salutation: but to this astonished person he announced himself in the new character of a sovereign; and, with that happy urbanity of humour for which he was so distinguished, he began to assume the high demeanour of royalty. He afterwards preserved the same deportment towards James himself; and when the latter expressed his amazement at such extraordinary conduct, Buchanan

admonished him of his having resigned the crown. This reply did not tend to lessen the monarch's surprise; for he now began to suspect his preceptor of mental derangement. Buchanan then produced that instrument by which he was formally invested; and, with the authority of a tutor, proceeded to remind him of the absurdity of assenting to petitions in so rash a manner.'

This anecdote seems to confirm the general impression which has been entertained regarding James's character in boyhood. He was of an easy, unsuspicious disposition; apt to take men at their own showing, and equally disposed to expect that his own conduct would be construed as he meant it. He had a great deal of that indolent good nature, which is so often found in men of studious and literary habits. He also, like many men of good intellect, knew better what ought to be done, than he possessed force of character to put it in practice.

Some more certain information regarding Buchanan's relation to James, is to be gathered from two dedications which the teacher wrote to his pupil. It is particularly remarkable, from these compositions, that one of Buchanan's chief objects in his system of instruction, was to inspire the King with a hatred of tyranny, and a sense of its inexpediency. In the dedication to a short Latin tragedy, entitled 'Baptistes, sive calumniæ tragœdia,' which was written in November 1576, when James was just out of his twelfth year, he says, 'But this more especially seems to belong to you, which explains the torments and miseries of tyrants, even when they seem to be in the most flourishing state, which I esteem not only

advantageous, but even necessary for you now to understand; that you may begin early to hate what you should always avoid. I desire also that this book may be a witness to posterity, that, if at any time you act otherwise, by the influence of wicked counsellors, or the wantonness of power getting the better of education, you may impute it not to your preceptors, but yourself, that slighted their good advice. God grant you a better fate, and (as your *favourite Sallust* has it) render beneficence natural to you by custom, which I sincerely wish and hope with many others.' Again, in the dedication of his more celebrated work, entitled 'De jure regni apud Scotos,' which was written three years later, he says he thought good to publish it, that it might be a standing witness of his affection towards him, and admonish him of his duty to his subjects. 'Many things,' says the writer, and the information is valuable, as proving the naturally good character of King James, 'persuaded me that this my endeavour should not be in vain; especially your age, not yet corrupted by prave opinions, and inclination far above your years for undertaking all *heroical* and noble attempts, spontaneously making haste thereunto; and not only your promptitude in obeying your instructors and governors, but all such as give you sound admonition; and your judgment and diligence in examining affairs, so that no man's authority can have much weight with you, unless it be confirmed by probable reason. I do perceive also,' continues Buchanan, 'that you, by a certain natural instinct, do much abhor flattery, which is the nurse of tyranny, and a most grievous plague of a kingdom; so as you

do hate the court solecisms and barbarisms, no less than those that seem to censure all elegancy do love and affect such things, and every where in discourse spread abroad as the sauce thereof, those titles of majesty, highness, and many other unsavoury compellations. Now, albeit your good natural disposition, and sound instructions, wherein you have been principled, may at present prevent you from falling into this error, yet am I forced to be something jealous of you, lest bad company, the fawning foster-mother of all vices, draw aside your soft and tender mind into the worst part; especially seeing I am not ignorant, how easily our other senses yield to seduction. This book, therefore, I have sent to you, to be not only your monitor, but also an importunate and bold exactor, which, in this your flexible and tender years, may conduct you in safety from the rocks of flattery, and not only admonish you, but also keep you in the way you are once entered into: and if at any time you deviate, it may reprehend and draw you back, the which if you obey, you shall, for yourself and all your subjects, acquire tranquillity and peace in life, and eternal glory in the life to come. From Stirling, January 10, 1579.'

It is strange that, while the sincerity of these attempts, on Buchanan's part, has been generally admired, no one has thought of pointing out the vanity with which he must have been inspired, in supposing that his political dreams were to have the power of directing his pupil in a novel and impracticable line of government. The second dedication was written after James had, in reality, assumed the management of the kingdom.

While these passages prove the amiable dispositions by which the young king was early distinguished, other circumstances manifest the notoriety which his accomplishments in learning had acquired for him at the same age, not only in his own country and England, but also throughout Europe. His fame, as a noted example of precocity of intellect, is particularly mentioned in a paper of *Remonstrances* which was afterwards presented to him by his nobles, when his addiction to favourites had begun to cloud the hopes originally entertained of him. There is yet extant, moreover, a paper, bearing date July 1576, and endorsed 'The Kingis Majesties Buikis:' it contains a list of ninety-two different articles, of which the titles, all except two, are in Latin, suggesting chiefly well-known classical authors and books of divinity. * At this time James was just ten. Unquestionably, any knowledge he might then have attained beyond the mere elements of learning, could scarcely be well digested, or of much account in forming his mind. Neither was a proficiency in literature the qualification most necessary to him in the very difficult situation he had been called to. Yet praise must nevertheless be allowed to him for a taste so superior to his years, and for his having displayed at least the disposition towards intellectual employment.

Whatever were his school-day aspirations, James was not destined, more than the generality of students, to remain long in enjoyment of them. Those delicious dreams which all scholars experience in the morning of the intellect, were in him disturbed even earlier than they generally are in men of

* See Preface to new edition of 'the Reulis and Cautelis of Poesie,' by Mr. R. P. Gillies.

inferior rank. The professional task which called this school-boy from his books, was no less than to re-edify, as it were, the Scottish monarchy, which had now lain for five-and-thirty years in ruins, under the feeble rule of women and regents. And it was his first duty to wrest his sceptre from the hand of MORTON!

It has been already mentioned, that this powerful nobleman became Regent in October 1573, after the death of the Earl of Mar. The Queen's party, which had stood out against all the three former Regents, soon perished before the forceful mind of Morton. He, in the first place, prevailed upon the Hamiltons and other friends of Mary throughout the country, to submit to him; then he laid siege to Edinburgh Castle, in which Kirkaldy and Maitland were ensconced. To assist him in this enterprise, Queen Elizabeth, with whom he was in terms of the closest friendship, and who supported him as chief of the Protestant interest in Scotland, sent a body of men from Berwick, along with a train of artillery. Morton caused these guns, the greater part of which had been taken from his countrymen at Flodden, to be planted against the fortress; and after a gallant resistance of thirty-four days, Kirkaldy capitulated on the promise of life.

Kirkaldy was acknowledged to be the very best soldier of his time in Scotland. He had served much abroad in his youth; and Sir James Melvil informs us, that he had once seen Henry II. of France point him out, and say, "Yonder is one of the most valiant men of our age." He is described as having been 'a lusty, strong, and well-proportioned personage, hardy, and of a magnanimous courage, secret and prudent in all his enterprises,

so that never one that he made or devised misgave where he was present himself.' His enemies alleged of him, in envy, that he set himself up as 'another Wallace;' but if he did entertain an ambition so great, he as certainly possessed the qualifications which entitled him to do so. He was a constant enemy to the oppressor, and friend to the poor. He was 'humble, gentle, and meek like a lamb in the house, but like a lion in the fields.' He did nothing for the sake of money or office; his only motive was good principle, his only object honest fame.

This truly noble person fell a sacrifice to his own honourable feeling. Morton, on his accession to the regency, resolved to make no general treaty with the Queen's party. That would have left them still respectable in strength, and placed no profit to his own personal account. His plan was to treat with either the *castle* or the *country* part of the faction separately, and, having given good terms to the one, to fall upon the other and make it his prey. He first proposed this to Kirkaldy; but that generous soldier rejected every offer which was not extended to his associates in the country. It was then laid before the country party, and accepted. Kirkaldy, consequently, left to himself, was easily reduced.

It was to the English ambassador, and not to Morton, that Kirkaldy and his friends professed to surrender themselves; and accordingly, they were kept several days in the lodgings of that personage in the town, previous to their being carried into England. Morton, however, found means to get them into his own power; and he then caused Kirkaldy to be hanged, like a common felon, at the city

cross. He was the more able to perform this violent action, that the captive was odious to the citizens on account of the damage he had done to the town in carrying on his defence, and also to the clergy for some offence he had given to the late John Knox. The people of that rude age beheld his amiable qualities, full-grown intellect, and accomplished reputation, all perish before their eyes, without the least regret, merely because he had injured a few of their house-tops, and remonstrated against the licentious tongue of one of their preachers.

After the reduction of the castle, Morton had not a single armed enemy in the country, the whole nation then agreeing to transfer their allegiance from the imprisoned Mary to her son. He carried on his government for some years with all the vigour which was to be expected from his character, and from his strict alliance with Elizabeth. His rule very much resembled that of his celebrated ally. It was a despotism of the most lofty and rigorous kind; but, being exercised in behalf of the popular religion, it was much more agreeable to the people than the most lenient reigns, which wanted that saving and sanctioning clause. Nothing, for instance, could equal Morton's treatment of the clergy, so far as temporalities were concerned. He is said, by various modes of exaction, to have reduced them almost to starvation. Yet because he professed to be the head of the Protestant interest, and defended their faith in the abstract, they exclaimed very little against him, nothing being valuable in the eyes of this singular and most self-denying race of men, in comparison with the protection of what they esteemed the

true religion. The same redeeming quality induced the people to express far less indignation than they might otherwise have done, at his debasement of the national coin, although that measure was productive of serious misery to them, and was only designed for his own benefit.

The character of Morton is altogether one of the most frightful of all those produced by his age and nation. An age of reformation will ever teem with such flagitious characters, and the Scottish reformation was certainly no exception from the general rule. But Morton was decidedly the worst of them all. Moray's character is relieved in its lengthy catalogue of vices—ingratitude, duplicity, murder, and ambition—by that strange love of justice and latent worth, which procured him the popular epithet of *good*. Maitland had wit and sense to redeem his exquisitely fraudulent character. Bothwell, wretch as he seems to have been, was perhaps too much a mere adventurer—too much a vain-glorious fool, to occasion unqualified disgust. Morton's, however, is a portrait without a single light; it is a thorough *silhouette*. His character is to this day treated with some leniency by our historians on account of his religion. But this is entirely the result of *â posteriori* reasoning. The religion which enlightened and ripened the national mind through a succession of ages, and which now commands esteem from its known good effects, had no benign influence on the character of any man at the time of its institution. It does not appear to have been embraced by a single public personage of the period for its own intrinsic merits. Such persons adopted it merely as the best means of acquiring a power over the

populace, or a share of the spoils of the elder church. It is a very natural feeling which causes us to look back with gratitude to any one who has even unintentionally done us good; but surely it is one which reason should endeavour to combat, or at least control.

Morton's character seems to have at last approached to something like the ogre of nursery fable or the giant of romance. He was a short but handsome man, dark even to the extremity of the family hue of the Douglases; his features were all in masses, corrugated and knotty; his eyes gleamed keenly over a pair of high cheek-bones; and his mouth, as seen imperfectly through a black bushy beard, had that prominent and ferocious aspect which in savage life indicates mere animal cupidity, but in the civilized condition betokens a propensity to all the lower passions. Although he was not the chief of the Douglas family, his great abilities and eminence in public life, together with the circumstance of his nephew the Earl of Angus being a minor, had long placed the whole power of that clan in his hands. Thus, he had a large *following*, as it was called, of adventurous dependants, who, regarding his will as a law, would have scrupled to execute no measure he chose to dictate. He had also taken great pains to fortify various castles throughout the country, for the reception of his immense gains, and the protection of his person. His chief residence was the castle of Dalkeith, six statute miles from Edinburgh. That house he had fortified in so careful a manner, and with such complicated strength, that the common people, remembering his character as the inhabitant, termed it *the Lion's Den*.

In the words of a quaint old writer, 'he erected that palace of Dalkeith to his no small charge, adorning it with tapestry and incomparable pieces of art, so that its splendour soars almost to a majesticall statelinesse.' * He also re-built the castle of Edinburgh from the ruined state in which the siege had left it; and to show how much he considered it a house for his own use, he caused the architect to place his own arms above the Scottish lion which overhung the principal gateway. As if even these fortresses in the metropolitan part of the kingdom were not sufficient for his protection he began to build a prodigious castle in the uplands of Tweeddale, apparently designing it as his last retreat when all others should have failed him, it being in a place where no artillery could have been brought to annoy him, and where a body of besiegers would have subsisted with difficulty. This strength (Drochils Castle) he did not live to finish; but the traveller through those lonely regions still sees with surprise an immense pile of stone-work rising from the bleak hill-side near his path, a monument of the wealth and terrific character of this singular man.

Among all the sins of Morton, his cupidity, perhaps, was the most dangerous to himself, both because it was the vice he could least control, and because it was apt to excite the most implacable sort of hostility against him among the people. He is stated by the old writer last quoted, to have once been reproved for this his besetting sin, by one of the professed jesters of his household—for Morton, with all his lofty characteristics, was not

* See R. Buchanan's Scotia Rediviva, i. 388.

superior to this folly of his age—and the manner was thus:—Some beggars one day applying to the Regent for his alms, Patrick Bowie, the personage mentioned, called to his Grace by all means to have these fellows burned to death. "What!" exclaimed Morton, "and are ye so uncharitable as to refuse mercy to those who so earnestly seek it?" "Why," answered the fool, "although ye were to commit these men to the flames to-day, you could, ere the sun run his course to-morrow, make as many rich men beggars."

His immoderate exactions at length excited so general a disgust, that the nation seemed only in want of a head to rise against him. This was supplied by the Earls of Argyle and Athole. These two noblemen having quarrelled regarding a Highland robber, and being on the point of commencing hostilities against each other, Morton caused them to be summoned to his presence, for the purpose, as they suspected, of being subjected to a fine for their disturbance of the peace. Their common danger caused them to unite against him; and, Alexander Erskine, uncle of the minor Earl of Mar, and his representative, as keeper of the King's person, happening, at the same time, to conceive a grudge at Morton, they found, through his means, access to the King, whom they wished to interest in their cause of complaint.

Morton, strange to say, had paid little attention to his interest in this important quarter. Seldom visiting James, he continued to consider him as a mere boy from whom he had nothing to apprehend. He had even lost the affections of every individual around James's person, without a thought

of the mischief to which he thereby exposed himself. Buchanan he had offended irreconcilably, if we are to believe Mr James Melvill, by withholding an ambling nag, which the pedagogue had lost during the civil wars, and which Morton had then bought. The Laird of Drumquasel, who was governor of the young King's household, also conceived mortal hatred at the Regent, for the very excellent reason that all the lickings of his office were anticipated by that voracious personage. Alexander Erskine had his own cause of wrath; and so had every other person, high and low, who attended upon the King. Morton was at length made conscious, by a friend, of the danger which threatened him in this quarter, and saw fit to bestow a few douceurs upon the various persons he had formerly offended. But this was rendered of little avail by the penetration of the young King. Whenever any of the reformed servants began to speak favourably of Morton, James at once reminded them of the different tone in which they had talked of him before, and asked how they had come to change their coats. He had himself no reason to regard Morton favourably, but was rather induced to wish his power brought down, that he might himself assume the government, for which, young as he was, some of his companions had already persuaded him he was fit.

Alexander Erskine having secretly admitted the Earls of Argyle and Athole to James's presence, it was now resolved that letters should be despatched to all the nobles whom they knew to be hostile to Morton, calling them to a convention at Stirling, for the purpose of deliberating on an alteration of the government. This being done with prudence and

expedition, a majority of the grandees had met to procure Morton's downfal, before he was himself aware of any design against him. Being quite unprepared, and finding no adequate party at hand to support him, he surprised the convention in his turn, by sending them an offer of his surrender of authority. This the King accepted, commanding him at the same time to deliver up the castle of Edinburgh. Morton then retired, as an old writer expresses it, 'to Lochleven Castle, to make the walks of his garden even, but his mind still occupied in crooked paths;' * while James, at the age of twelve, assumed the sovereign power, under the controul of a council of nobles.

The lords, however, were, after all, more indebted for this change to Morton's want of preparation, than to any thing else. A very little time enabled him to rally his friends and his courage; and three months had scarcely elapsed, ere he found himself again seated in considerable authority at the King's council-board, within Stirling Castle. Seeing the necessity of now paying court to the young monarch, he applied himself assiduously to that task; and he soon succeeded so well, as to procure his consent to an ambassage to England. The nobles again took alarm, and prepared to suppress him a second time. But as he had surrounded himself with three or four thousand of his nephew's retainers, the task was now one of greater difficulty. Contriving, nevertheless, to raise an army of magnitude equal to his own, they marched against him; and a meeting took place between the two hosts on the banks of the

* Sir James Melvill.

Carron, betwixt Falkirk and Stirling. By the mediation of Bowes, the English ambassador, the differences of the two parties were composed for this time, Morton agreeing that a certain number of the enemy should be admitted into the King's council, as a counterbalance to his own authority. The government was afterwards carried on for a considerable time on this modified plan.

James appears to have conducted himself, during these struggles, with a degree of impartiality and caution above what was to be expected from his boyish years. In a speech which he made to the contending parties after the pacification, he professed to regard both with the affection due from a monarch to his chief nobility, and earnestly repeated, several times, that his only wish was to see them united in one friendly council around him. It seems to have been very early perceived by James, that a neutral and negative mode of conduct was the only one by which he could hope to *bruik* his government, as he would himself have said, in peace or comfort. Divided as the nation was on the subject of religion; himself distracted betwixt the party which had hitherto governed him, and that which was inclined henceforth to serve him; at once obliged to govern a country inclined to Presbyterianism, and yet to act in such a way as not to offend the Episcopalian kingdom which he expected to inherit; it may easily be conceived that his situation as a ruler was one of extreme difficulty. Nor was he a monarch who succeeded peaceably to a government left him by a father, and who finds a path chalked out before him. His patrimonial monarchy, poor at the very best, as compared with others, was in absolute

ruins even at the moment when he, an infant of thirteen months, had become possessed of it. As he grew up, he found his right of rule partly usurped by the nobles, who had necessarily assumed the direction of affairs during the minorities of his mother and himself, and partly denied or scoffed at by the people, whose opinions on that subject were now modulated to the humour of a church decidedly republican. It was his task to retrieve a little of the authority which was thus strangely impignorated; and, in making the attempt, the utmost caution was necessary.

Whatever wish he might possess to have the friendship of the nobles, he either did not attempt to secure it, or, if he did attempt it, he did not succeed in gaining his end. In his youth, we find him abandoned almost entirely to the guidance of two individuals, neither of whom belonged to that influential class—James Stuart, a second son of Lord Ochiltree, and Esme or Amatus Stuart, a cousin of his father, and nephew of the late Earl of Lennox. The first of these men was a military adventurer of peculiarly bold temper, and, it is said, of flagitious life, but very much attached to the person of the young monarch, and inclined to stick at nothing in doing him service. Esme Stuart was a person of gentler, and in every respect better character. The first had been introduced to James's friendship in the capacity of a captain in his body guard. The other came to Scotland, to prosecute his claims on the Lennox Peerage and estate. James's attachment to them has been stigmatised as favouritism; and the vices of the first, and Catholicism of the second, have been alike fruitful subjects of invective, to their

contemporaries and to modern historians. But, laying the youth of James out of the question altogether, it was surely allowable, in so tumultuous and difficult a scene, to seek refuge in the bosoms of two friends about his own age, who professed a friendship for his own sake. If we look back upon the history of Scotland for a century before his time, we find every king endeavouring to form a personal guard of friends around him, distinct from the territorial powers. Such were Cochrane and others to James III., such the clergy and the commons to James V., such the French guard to the Queen Regent, and such was Rizzio to Mary. As it would thus appear to have been rather a measure of necessity than any thing else, we are led to believe that James's adoption of these two youthful favourites was a much more excusable matter than it is generally represented to have been.

One of the first services of a public nature which the two Stuarts performed for him, was their procuring the ruin of his formidable minister, or rather master, the Earl of Morton. James Stuart was the most active and apparent agent in this affair. Entering the Council-room one day, he fell down upon his knees, and accused the Earl of Morton of being concerned in the murder of the late King Henry, (Lord Darnley.) The Earl was immediately seized, and committed to Edinburgh Castle. He had procured an act of council and parliament, on the demission of his regency, assuring him that he should never be afterwards blamed for any deed committed before that time. But it was not one of the maxims of state in Scotland at this period, to pay attention to a claim un-

enforced by strength of arms or their influence. Of all such means of defence Morton was now destitute, the party of his friends being weak compared with that which wished his destruction. Elizabeth, who felt her own interest at stake with his life, interfered, it is true, with all her influence to preserve him, and, when embassies failed, even resorted to the measure of gathering an army on the borders to intimidate the King. But this last act only insured the death of her friend; for an army being necessarily raised to defend the frontiers, James used it as a guard to convey Morton to the scaffold, when he could not perhaps have accomplished his bold undertaking by other means.

In exact proportion as we regard the character of the living and reigning Morton with the awe due to majestic villany, so do we contemplate the circumstances of his death with feelings of an agitating and painful nature. The mind, indeed, which has for any length of time studied the life of this man, in all its circumstances of power, talent, ferocity, and pride, is apt, when it comes to look upon him in his degraded condition, to wonder how men were found to manacle and guard, how jurors were found to condemn, and how an executioner was found to behead him. He was kept for several months before his trial in Dunbarton Castle, the property of his chief enemy, Esme Stuart, who was now created Duke of Lennox. During the interval, his other grand enemy Captain James Stuart, was created Earl of Arran, a title just vacated by the attainder of the powerful house of Hamilton, which Morton is said to have furthered before his accusation, in consequence of a prophecy which foretold that the *heart* (his

cognisance) should fall by the *stouth of Arran*. When the precept arrived at Dunbarton Castle for transporting him to Edinburgh, he was startled at seeing the Earl of Arran mentioned in it as one of the two who should command his guard. Inquiring of the keeper of the castle who this Arran was, and being informed that it was Stuart, he was struck with surprise. "And is it so?" he said; "I know, then, what I may look for." It was supposed that he looked upon this accidental re-appearance of the dreaded name, in connection with a sworn enemy, as a certain proof that the prophecy should hold good.

His trial took place at Edinburgh on the first of June 1581. As he himself observed, it did not signify whether, in the matter charged to him, he was as innocent as St Stephen, or as guilty as Judas. His death was determined on, and he was accordingly condemned. On the morning of the succeeding day (that of his execution), he was waited on by some of the ministers of Edinburgh, to whom he uttered a lengthened confession of his concern in Darnley's murder, amounting to no more than the guilt of fore-knowing and concealing it. He also joined them in some devotional exercises, and entered into a discussion of the state of his mind on the score of religion, and his hopes of immortality. When that was done, he invited his ghostly counsellors to breakfast with him; which they consented to, although far less disposed to eat than the unhappy culprit before them. *He* ate his breakfast with great cheerfulness, talking all the time.

One of his remarks on this occasion supplies us with a very curious psychological fact. "I now

observe," said he, "that there is a great difference between a man who is occupied with the cares of the world, and him that is free from them: the night before my accusation, I could get no rest for care; anxiety to prepare proper answers for any charge which should be put to me on the morrow, kept me awake the whole night: Last night, on the contrary, when I knew I only had to die, I never slept better in my life. William," he added, turning to Captain William Stuart of the guard, "you can bear me record of this?" Stuart answered, "it is true, my Lord," and confirmed the belief of the hearers in a circumstance which they might otherwise have questioned.

Mr Walter Balcanqual, a minister, now said to him, "My Lord, I will drink to you, on condition that you and I shall drink together, in the kingdom of heaven, of that immortal drink which shall never suffer us to thirst again." He answered, "Truly, I will pledge you, Mr Walter, on the same condition." Having then taken up a cup, he said to John Dury, another of the clergymen in attendance, "John, I will drink to you on the same condition;" to which proposal John assented; and the whole three then drank this singular toast. He afterwards retired to the solitude of an inner chamber, where he spent the hours of the forenoon.

Early in the afternoon, the clergymen returned, and in a still greater number. Morton, singling out Mr John Ferguson, whom he had not seen at breakfast, embraced him very cordially. "Mr John," said he to this individual, "you once wrote a little book against me; but truly, I never meant evil

towards you in my mind: forgive you me, and I forgive you." This behaviour moved Ferguson to tears. He then sat down to dinner. During his meal, the clergymen, learning that the King had received an erroneous account of his confession, it was resolved that three of them should go to Holyroodhouse, where his Majesty was now residing, and give him a more correct report of it, so that the Ex-Regent might die with a satisfied mind on that score. They did so, and the result was an order that he should be beheaded at once, without the preliminary ceremony of hanging.

When the clergymen returned with this order, the jailor informed him that he must now proceed to the scaffold. "Seeing they have troubled me so much to-day," said he, "with worldly things, I thought they would have given me a night beside, to have advised ripely with my God." The keeper answered, "All things are now ready, my Lord; and I think they will not stay." "I praise my God," said he, "I am ready also," and immediately passed towards the gate.

Here a strange scene occurred. Arran now came ruffling up, and, having led him back to the chamber, requested him to tarry till his confession should be put in writing, and signed with his name: "Nay, my Lord," said Morton, "trouble me no more, I pray you, with these things. I am now at a point to go to my death, and have a much nobler thing to muse on—to prepare for my God. I cannot write in the state wherein I now am. All these honest men can testify to what I have spoken in that matter."

Arran, touched perhaps by the resignation of

the man he had persecuted to death, now expressed a wish to part with him on good terms. "My Lord," he said, "you will be reconciled to me: I assure you I have done nothing against you from any particular grudge, but in the mere course of my duty to the King." Morton replied, "It is no time now to remember quarrels: I have no quarrel to you nor any other: I forgive you and all others, as I will you forgive me." This whole interview certainly puts the *bad taste* of the age in a striking point of view.

Morton then passed towards the scaffold. It was remarked of him, as a very unexpected thing, that, being solicited for charity as he went along by a multitude of beggars, he had no money of his own, but was obliged to have recourse to a friend who accompanied him, before he could perform the distribution of his own *dead-dole*, so it was called, in the style expected from a culprit of his rank. The people were thus perplexed more than ever, as to the fate of the immense loads of gold which he had amassed during his government.

When arrived at the last fatal stage, he addressed the people with a firm countenance and voice, more than once using the expression—"Sure I am, the King shall lose a good servant this day."—"I testify before God," said he, "as I professed the gospel which this day is taught and professed in Scotland, so also I willingly lay down my life in the profession thereof; and, howbeit I have not walked thereunto as I ought, yet I am assured God will be merciful to me. I pray you all, good Christians, pray for me. I charge you all in the name of God that are professors of the gospel, that ye continue in the true profession thereof, and main-

win it to your power, as I should have done (God willing) with my life, lands, and goods, aye and as long as I had lived; which, if you do, I assure you God will be merciful to you. But if you do it not, be sure the vengeance of God shall light on you, body and soul."

An earnest prayer was then made in his behalf by one of the attendant clergy; during which Morton lay prostrate on his face, giving manifest signs, by the rebounding of his body from the scaffold, as well as by audible sobs, of the effect which it had upon his feelings. When that was done, a number of persons came, like Arran, to be reconciled to him. All these he received with expressions of kindness. He then advanced with a placid countenance to the block, laid down his head, and began to utter such devout ejaculations as "Lord Jesus, receive my soul! into thy hands, Lord, I commit my spirit!" which were only interrupted by the descent of the axe. *

To increase the public excitement which attended Morton's execution, it was performed by a novel instrument, which he himself had introduced into Scotland, and which had an uncommonly dreadful appearance. This instrument he copied from one he had seen in his youth in Italy; but, though he caused it to be constructed some time during his government, it had never been used till now, when, probably in consequence of the remission of that part of his sentence which condemned him to be hanged, it was applied in his own favour. It almost exactly resembled the modern French

* MS. Account of Morton's confession and last moments, in Matthew Crawford's Collections, Advocates' Library.

guillotine; and it still exists. The epithet of 'the Maiden,' by which it is now so well known, was conferred upon it by the populace, in metaphorical allusion to the circumstance of Morton having been the first that submitted to its embraces. *

During the whole of that long summer afternoon, Morton's body lay on the public scaffold, covered only by a beggar's blue gown, no man, out of all the thousands who had formerly waited on his nod, now daring to give it burial. It was at length conveyed by porters to the place where criminals were usually interred. His head was next day fixed on the tolbooth. †

* This is stated distinctly in 'ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑ, or Remarkable Instances of Divine Providence,' a curious manuscript of the reign of Charles II., in the Advocates' Library.

† Spottiswoode's Church History, 314.

CHAPTER III.

RAID OF RUTHVEN—ARRAN'S GOVERNMENT—RETURN OF THE BANISHED NOBLES—JAMES'S FIRST LITERARY EFFORT.

1581—1584.

FROM the very first, James was the *protegé* of Elizabeth, who wished in him to rear a Scottish monarch, that should add the support of his kingdom to the Protestant bulwark which she was building up against the Catholics, and an heir to her own kingdom, whose religious principles should give no countenance or cause of hope to that party. Throughout all his early years, she had contrived to further these objects, by having him and his kingdom under the control of Regents, who were subservient to her interests. Now, however, when he had attained to nearly a mature age, and was himself in possession of the government, she found her task a somewhat more difficult one, inasmuch as he showed symptoms of a wish to bethink and act for himself; and even seemed inclined to lend a favourable ear to the solicitations with which he was plied by the Catholics and other friends of his mother, who proposed to him a scheme for associating her in the government with himself. There was indeed great reason for Elizabeth to

fear that his first emotions, on attaining to the rank of manhood, should dispose him to regard his mother, and consequently her religion and her party, with a degree of favour inconsistent with the interests of the Reformation. And he really seems to have given her some occasion to believe this fear well-grounded. All the discipline of Buchanan, and all the rigours of the Calvinistic theory in which he was educated, had failed to make him what was wanted. Like many other youths who are *too carefully* educated, he seemed disposed to baulk entirely the wishes of his friends. His surrendering his affections to Lennox, who was a Catholic, and appeared as an emissary of the French king, was an almost decisive proof of his disposition to shake off his 'good cousin and sister of England.' Finally, she could no longer doubt that he was nearly lost to her, when he sacrificed Morton to the demands of Lennox; Morton, her most confidential friend, and who had even consented, it is said, to a scheme which she proposed for carrying James to England, and placing him as a prisoner in her hands.

It must therefore be perceived, that, after Morton's execution, James's attachment to the Protestant interest was extremely problematical—or rather, abandoned as he was to the guidance of Lennox, that he gave Elizabeth, and the Protestants in general, reason to suppose he was entirely thrown into the hands of the Catholics.

This was a state of things not to be long endured in a country where the majority were reformed, and the influence of an alien Protestant sovereign was paramount to the native government. Elizabeth and the Scotch Protestant lords

very soon rallied against the danger which threatened them; and within the course of a year after Morton's death, they had matured a conspiracy for bringing James back again into their control. The transaction is known in Scottish history by the epithet of the *Raid* (or enterprise) *of Ruthven*, from the warlike aspect which it assumed in conformity with the spirit of the time, and from the place where it was carried into effect.

James, who early showed a passion for field sports, was, in August 1582, conducted for the first time into Athole, to enjoy the pleasures of a Highland hunting-match. On that occasion, for some reason unexplained, neither Lennox nor Arran accompanied him. The first stayed behind in the castle of Dalkeith, which he had acquired with other parts of Morton's property. The second remained at Kinneil, a castle in West Lothian, of which he had become possessed in a similar way, in consequence of the attainder of the Hamiltons. As the King was returning from the Highlands, he was led aside to spend a night in Ruthven Castle, a seat of the Earl of Gowrie, near Perth. Here, during the evening, he was surprised to observe that a great number of armed men arrived at the house, in parties, without any very apparent errand. Not choosing to express any fear, although he felt a great deal, he waited patiently till next day, when, as he was about to pass from his chamber, the Master of Glammis thrust his foot against the opening door, and informed him that he must stay where he was. James, seriously alarmed, tried every method to move this stern janitor, threatened, entreated, and finally burst into tears. "No matter for his tears,"

said the Master; "it's better bairns should greet than bearded men." The heads of the conspiracy then approached—to wit, the Earls of Gowrie, Athole, Mar, Rothes, and Glencairn, with some of inferior title,—and presented a written remonstrance to the young King, praying him to remove his two favourites from his councils, and adopt a ministry more agreeable to his people. James saw the necessity of treating the paper with respect, but was not able altogether to conceal the indignation which he felt at the restraint imposed upon his person.

It was soon publicly known that the King was detained at Ruthven; and the two favourites lost no time in attempting to procure his release. Lennox sent a messenger to inquire into his condition; but, on James declaring to this person that he was a prisoner, the conspirators put him also into confinement. Arran, on learning what had taken place, immediately rode to Ruthven, and with a boldness which almost redeems the bad qualities attributed to him, presented himself single before the enraged men who had met for his destruction. When they heard him loudly demanding to be introduced to the King, they would have instantly sacrificed him to their resentment; but he was saved by the intercession of the Countess of Gowrie, to whom he happened to be distantly related. He was only commanded to keep himself secluded from public affairs in a remote part of the kingdom, under the penalty of treason. Lennox was, at the same time, commanded to sequester himself in his castle of Dunbarton.

Various attempts were made by this last nobleman to rouse the spirit of the nation in behalf of

their monarch, whom he represented as in the greatest personal danger, from a band of enemies. But every attempt he made was frustrated by the edicts of the very person he wished to serve, the conspirators obliging the King to assure the people by proclamations, that he was perfectly contented with his situation, and to order all bodies of men which had been associated in his behalf to be dispersed. Even without these edicts, it does not appear that he could have effectually made head against the confederated noblemen. The clergy had at once perceived the conspiracy to be favourable to their religion and form of church government; and the people, taking their cue from the preachers, were in general disposed to let the King remain where he was.

James was successively brought to Perth, Stirling, and Edinburgh, treated all the way with respect, but still most carefully guarded. When the news of the Raid reached Elizabeth, she affected surprise, and sent two ambassadors down to Scotland for the ostensible purpose of inquiring into his circumstances, and condoling with him upon them, if they should be found painful, though all the time she was in reality at the bottom of the plot. His mother, too, very soon heard of an affair which was so directly contrary to her interest; and, from her prison, she addressed a letter to the English Queen, praying her to rescue James from his rebellious subjects. The Catholic princes of the Continent were also soon made aware of what had taken place; and the King of France sent two ambassadors to Scotland, to endeavour all they could to procure James's release.

But every effort which James or his friends

could make to procure his freedom, was for some time unsuccessful. The conspirators, knowing that their object, and even their personal safety, could only be secure so long as they retained him, were vigilant and inexorable to the last degree. They never trusted him for a moment out of their sight. They directed him in every public act. No friend, whether native or foreign, was permitted to speak to him, except in their presence. Lennox they compelled to retire to France, where he soon after died of chagrin. And the French ambassadors were treated with a degree of coldness, which speedily obliged them to quit the country.

James continued in this state of constraint for ten months. At length, about the end of June 1583, he had with great skill and secrecy devised a plan for escape. Towards the end of his period of confinement, the confederated lords began to relax a little in their vigilance. Arran had by that time been so long banished, that they ceased to fear his return. Lennox they knew to be dead. James himself had thought proper to express such an acquiescence in their views, as led them to suppose him quite reconciled to their control. They now, therefore, scrupled less to admit suspected noblemen to his presence, and permitted him to have a wider scope in pursuing his favourite sports.

Under favour of these circumstances, James found means to attach a party to his own personal interests, consisting of the Earls of Argyle, Marischal, and Montrose, besides the Earl of Rothes, who had been one of the confederates. Having contrived a scheme with these nobles, he left

Edinburgh for Fife, through which county he proposed enjoying a hawking-match, previous to attending a convention of Estates which had been called to meet at St Andrews. On this occasion, few of the Ruthven conspirators attended him, most of them having retired to their country seats, to look after their own affairs. As he passed along the country betwixt Falkland and St Andrews, he was joined by numbers of the new conspirators; so that when he reached the archiepiscopal city, he was in such strength as to defy his late ministry. Having taken possession of the primate's castle, formerly the stronghold of Beatoun, he no longer scrupled to declare himself free.

James was by no means rendered an unaccountable despot by this new arrangement. The lords who assisted him in procuring his liberation, were only a shade less disposed to constrain him than his former controllers. It was only, indeed, upon an understanding that he was to pardon the Ruthven conspirators, and act for the future in concert with a council of his chief nobles, that his new friends consented to assist him. Accordingly, his first act, after regaining his liberty, was to publish an edict, allowing the Raid of Ruthven to have been good service, and professing that he should not henceforth permit it, or any other past occurrence, to be an obstacle to the agreement of his nobility, and the general contentment of his subjects.

James's whole conduct, after this conspiracy, was that of a good-tempered man. Although his confinement had been very uneasy, and must have left a painful impression on his mind, as tending to diminish him in the eyes of his subjects and of

the neighbouring sovereigns, yet he expressed no reluctance whatever to pardon the men chiefly instrumental in it. The simplest expression of contrition on their part was sufficient to procure not only the forgiveness, but even the renewed friendship, of the easy-natured monarch. For instance, the Earl of Gowrie, although the principal conspirator, was the very first to be received upon these cheap terms into favour; and James did not hesitate, within the course of a few days after the regainment of his liberty, to visit this nobleman at the very house where his capture took place ten months before, and there grant him a formal remission of his supposed offence. It is generally stated by historians, upon the credit of Spottiswoode, that the King never forgot the disrespectful language which the Master of Glammis used on shutting the door against him at Ruthven. But those who are so glad to draw unfavourable conclusions from this report, surely overlook the fact, that James employed the Master of Glammis in the high office of Treasurer, for the ten years between 1585 and 1595, a period when he was completely the director of his own affairs.

Had James only possessed strength of mind to continue the conduct thus pointed out by his easy disposition, there would have been very little to blame in the immediately ensuing part of his history. Unfortunately, the very facility of temper which caused him so easily to overlook the Ruthven treason, was the means of soon after throwing his government into as confused a state as ever. It seems to have been one of the stipulations of his new friends, that Arran should be no more admitted to his presence. Accordingly, when the

Earl solicited permission to congratulate him on his emancipation, he was scrupulously refused. James, however, still regarding that bold and vicious man with the reverence which the best natures are so often observed to pay to the worst, merely from the sense of inferior vigour of character, entreated that the Earl might, as he wished, just be admitted to kiss his hand, and spend one day at court. The request being granted, he at once relapsed into his former weakness, honoured Arran with a complete restoration to his affection and his councils, and from that time became once more the slave of a favourite. One of the causes of this seems to have been, the King's passion for amusement. He had hitherto, according to the advice of Sir James Melville and other sagacious old servants, attended an hour every day in council, to receive personally the benefit of a multitude of good advices on his affairs. But he was now persuaded by the Earl of Arran to depute this business to him, so that his sports might not be interrupted, and only to receive from his lordship a report of what had passed in council after his return from the fields. When Arran had once gained this point, it was easy for him to attain the rest. By giving his master false reports of the council, and inciting him to act accordingly, he became once more, what he had formerly been, the dictator of the whole government.

Immediately, a different course of policy was pursued in regard to the late conspiracy. A proclamation was issued, ordering all who had been concerned in it to take remissions of their crime; which, being interpreted as an insidious attempt to bring them into an acknowledgment of the guilt

of treason, and as calculated to subject them to all the penalties due to that offence, caused inexpressible alarm. No one obeying the proclamation, Arran published another, threatening to esteem all who should not deliver themselves up on a certain day as traitors. The Earl of Angus alone obeyed this second edict; all the rest either fled to England, or remained in hiding at home.

By this course, Arran succeeded in rendering himself perfectly single in the direction of his master's affairs, and enriched himself with a vast harvest of forfeitures. The estate of the Earl of Gowrie was one of the chief objects of his cupidity, and it is to be regretted that the indecisive conduct of that nobleman gave the unworthy favourite but too good an opportunity of gratifying his wishes. The King, who entertained a sincere friendship for Gowrie, endeavoured to reconcile him and Arran, by bringing them to a meeting at Cupar. But it was not the soft entreaties of the simple-minded young monarch that could save his friend. Arran contrived to give Gowrie sufficient reasons for alarm to make him take refuge at Dundee, and prepare to quit the country. While he was yet lingering there, the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glammis, engaged him in a conspiracy to re-erect their own party and depose Arran. These three noblemen, on the 18th of April, 1584, surprised Stirling Castle, which had been for some time in the keeping of the favourite. But as they were expecting to hear of corresponding measures on the part of Gowrie, they learned that he had just been seized by a party of the king's guard. While they were as yet unrecovered from the consternation consequent upon that intelligence, they also learned that

Arran had rallied a large army round the King, and was marching with him to Stirling. Of course, they abandoned their enterprise, and again sought safety out of Scotland. Gowrie was then tried for his recent offence, condemned, and, to the great regret of all the liberal and Presbyterian party, as well as all who really wished well to James, beheaded at the cross of Stirling.

It was not by this violent proceeding alone that Arran's government was distinguished. Several persons of less note fell sacrifices to his resentment. So far indeed did James permit his better nature to be overborne by this man, that he allowed a sentence of forfeiture to pass against the Countess of Mar, the virtuous old lady who had nursed his infancy with such scrupulous care; and he soon after allowed the last pains of the law to take effect on Cunningham of Drumwhassel, who had been master of his household. At the same time, he consented to a great number of acts of parliament which were driven through by Arran, violently adverse to the interests as well as the liberties of his subjects.

It was in an especial degree against the church that Arran directed his vengeance; and the church at that time, unfortunately, lay peculiarly exposed to the malevolence of such a ruler. Perhaps it is necessary to explain the present circumstances of this body. Its chief feature was an independence of spirit, which disposed its members to allow of no control or supervision on the part of the state, and which caused them to declaim publicly from the pulpit against every proceeding of the court, with which they happened to be displeased. The times had long countenanced them in these lofty privileges, for, during the first age which suc-

ceeded the Reformation, there had been no government in the country strong enough to resist them. The people, moreover, were disposed in their own minds to pay so much reverence to the clergy, that no claims which they could present, wanted enforcement from public opinion. It was one of the fundamental beliefs of the church in that age, that, as their faith was founded solely on scripture, so should they be ruled only by the divine being who devised that code of doctrine; that, to use their own words, Christ was the only and true head of their church. It is needless at the present day, when such a belief is only cherished by a few obscure sects, to point out that this was just making themselves their own rulers, since, on account of the invisibility and non-presence of their supposed head, they were obliged to act as his representatives: neither is it necessary to assert in favour of the government of that age, that neither it, nor any other government then established in Europe, could have co-existed with such a scheme, if instituted in the full vigour which the clergy contemplated. It may only be allowable to the calm thinker of the present day, to regret the extremes to which men then carried their opinions on such subjects; extremes as natural, perhaps, after the impulse given to public opinion by the Reformation, as the first wide oscillations of the pendulum after it has been put into motion.

It could scarcely be supposed, that a body which was at once inspired with an assurance of its own irresponsibility, and with a violent horror of every exertion of a similar privilege in the government, should long continue on good terms with the Earl of Arran, especially as it had expressed open joy

at his late deposition by the Ruthven confederacy, and thus secured his mortal hatred. At his very first assumption of the supreme power, many of them acknowledged their fears by flying to England. Others of a bolder temper, who had stood out, now gave him the very opportunities he wished of crushing them, by inveighing against his government from the pulpit. Among others, the noted Andrew Melvill was selected for vengeance. He was accused of having openly censured the King before his congregation. He succeeded in disproving the particular charges brought against him; but still, as he was a peculiarly violent leader in the pseudo-irresponsible courts of the church, it was resolved that he should not escape. He was charged with the crime of declining the judgment of the Privy Council; and commanded, under the pain of treason, to enter himself in ward, as it was called, within the Castle of Blackness, which was then kept by Arran, and in which, of course, his life would have been in great danger. To avoid the fate that seemed to be prepared for him, he fled to England; an event which spread consternation and rage amongst the clergy and their flocks, who justly regarded Melvill as the chief pillar of their tabernacle.

Elizabeth, who could not fail to regard Arran's proceedings with alarm, thought proper, at this juncture, to send a personage of no less note than her secretary Sir Francis Walsingham, to inquire what could be done in Scotland towards establishing a better state of things. Walsingham, on account of his great age and ill health, travelled in a carriage; and to protect his person, he was escorted by no fewer than a hundred and forty Eng-

lish gentlemen on horseback. James felt flattered by receiving so dignified an ambassador, and treated Sir Francis with much distinction at Perth, where they held a lengthened discourse on the state of the kingdom. Strange to say, the youthful monarch, although weak enough to permit Arran to misgovern his country in the way described, talked in so very plausible and sensible a style with the English secretary, that, at his leaving the presence-chamber, he could not help exclaiming to Sir James Melvill, "that he was the best content man that could be, for he had spoken with a notable young prince, ignorant of nothing, and of so great expectation, that he thought his travel well bestowed." Walsingham utterly refused to have the least intercourse with Arran; which so offended the latter, that, instead of sending him a rich ring of seven hundred crowns value, which the King had appointed to be presented to him at his departure, he gave him a mean bauble, gemmed only with a piece of crystal. The exact purpose of this embassy has never been defined, for it was followed by no result; but there can be no doubt that Elizabeth wished to impose some control of a more salutary nature than that of Arran, over "her good cousin of Scotland." It is certain that Walsingham gave her an extremely favourable account of James, insomuch that, fearing it should spread amongst her people, and cause them to shift part of their reverence from her own person to his, she thought proper to put the secretary for some time out of favour.

Elizabeth seems to have been convinced by Walsingham's report, that Scotland would now require a different mode of management from that which

she had hitherto practised. James had arrived at that period of life when the senses are least under the guidance of reason. It was now possible for him to form such a matrimonial connexion, as might derange all her schemes, and even prove of serious detriment to the interests of her people. In order to prevent the possibility of his marrying a Catholic, which she of all things most dreaded, and which she had some reason to fear might take place, she despatched her new secretary, Davison, to endeavour to gain Arran to her interests; and at the same time sent one Wotton, more particularly addressed to the young King. Davison soon succeeded in drawing on a conference between Arran and Lord Hunsden on the Borders; the result of which was, an engagement, on the part of the Scottish minister, to keep the King unmarried for three years. Wotton played his part with equal dexterity. It was his duty to place himself in that relation to the Scotch monarch which Lennox had lately enjoyed—to amuse him with courtly stories, to join him in his sports, and take every other means of gaining his favour by amusing his senses. The unsuspicious good nature of James permitted the English courtier to be very successful in this strange employment.

At this period, three ambassadors arrived with a grand equipment from Denmark, giving out, as their ostensible object, that they were commissioned by their King to make some demands upon James regarding the sovereignty of the islands of Orkney and Shetland, but, in reality, to sound the way for a marriage between James and one of the young princesses of that country. There was something amusing in the treatment which these

gentlemen experienced amidst the tempestuous politics of Scotland. James himself wished to give them an honourable reception, and to entertain them, according to the general custom, at his own expense, so long as they should remain in his country. But the Earl of Arran took effectual means to counteract all his wishes. Being directed to remove from Dunfermline, where they had been introduced to the King, to St Andrews, and to wait there for their answer, previous to re-embarking for their own country, James informed them, that he should allow them the use of his own horses for their journey. Upon that assurance, they sent away their baggage and servants by other conveyances, and were ready booted for mounting the King's horses, which were promised at a particular hour, when Arran interfered, to prevent their receiving that piece of royal courtesy. Finding that they were insulted, they set forward from Dunfermline on foot, expressing no little indignation at their treatment. The King soon learned what had taken place, and endeavoured to repair the effect of Arran's insolence, by sending the horses after them; yet they justly esteemed themselves as used in a manner quite contrary to the customs of all civilized nations. When they reached St Andrews, they were delayed from day to day with promises of a speedy dispatch to their business; and during the interval, Arran employed his creatures to make them objects of public ridicule whenever they appeared abroad. Wotton also, under the pretence of friendship, took occasion to inflame them with reports of contemptuous language which he professed to have heard the King use regarding them and their country. They were at last so com-

pletely incensed, that they threatened to go to their ships, without waiting for the King's answer to their master's message, which would have inevitably occasioned a war between Denmark and Scotland. Fortunately, Sir James Melville prevailed upon them to stay, till, having prompted the King to give them some more respectful treatment, and an agreeable reply to their embassage, they at last quitted Scotland with minds somewhat less exasperated, and not altogether convinced that it was exclusively the residence of barbarians.

It was at this period that the Master of Gray first took part in the troubled scenes of the Scottish court. He had been originally what was called a practising Papist—that is, an enterpriser in the great and hazardous schemes which the Catholics of that age were constantly busied with for the restoration of their religion in Britain. He seems to have been gifted by nature and education with all the craft necessary for carrying on so dangerous a profession. He was first recommended to James, by the address with which he managed some correspondence between him and his mother. Arran, who was at first his friend, soon became alarmed at the progress he made in the King's favour, and endeavoured to ruin him by sending him to Elizabeth, on an embassage which it was scarcely possible for him to accomplish with success. Gray, however, contrived not only to escape the dangers which attended his mission, but also to form a conspiracy with the banished Lords, whom he met in England, for the overthrow of Arran. There was now the strongest reason for expecting success to any attempt of this nature. Arran had never before been so universally detested as he now was.

His enemies had never before entertained so consistent a purpose against him. And Elizabeth, having discovered the insecurity of any bargain with so unprincipled a man, was, at the present juncture, disposed to favour a scheme which promised to throw James into the hands of her own assured minions, the Protestant nobility.

The conspiracy was matured towards the close of the year 1585; and, assuredly, the way in which it was conducted, is calculated to give a most romantic view of the manners of that age. The whole object, be it remarked, was what would now be called a change of ministry. In addition, however, to the exquisite political chicanery which would be employed at the present day in accomplishing such an object, we find in this case vassals secretly assembled, knapscaps privately furnished up, swords sharpened, and towns and castles rendered fit to hold out against a lengthened siege. Among other matters of this sort, it is not a little amusing to find the Border clans, so remarkable for their indifference to the laws of *meum* and *tuum*, mustered to take an active hand in what was effectually a matter of law and civil polity.

The Master of Gray was much assisted in his arrangements, after returning to Scotland, by Sir Lewis Bellenden, Lord Justice-Clerk, and Sir John Maitland, the Secretary, both of whom regarded Arran with intense, though well disguised hatred. The whole machinations, both in Scotland and England, were conducted with admirable secrecy. Gray, having resolved to muster his own vassals, retired to Fife and Perthshire for that purpose, giving out that he designed only to march

against Lord Maxwell on a matter of police, that nobleman having lately excited the King's displeasure by an attack on the Laird of Johnston. Unfortunately, something transpired to give Arran a suspicion of his intentions; and he was immediately summoned to court. This was an extremely perplexing affair; for if he should obey the summons, he was apt to be seized, while, on the other hand, the general scheme was not sufficiently mature to justify his bidding it open defiance. He resolved, however, to obey it. Riding to Stirling, where the court was then held, he had an audience of the King, during which he completely succeeded in vindicating himself from Arran's suspicions. The favourite was so much incensed at this, as to resolve upon stabbing the Master in James's presence, or at least within the castle. But Gray contrived to remain at court till the event of the conspiracy, without thus becoming the victim of his enemy's resentment.

James was at Hamilton, enjoying the sport of hawking, when he was informed that the banished nobles were at the frontiers of the kingdom, attended by a body of English and Borderers, with which they were resolved immediately to advance against him. He lost no time in retiring to Stirling, which had recently been fortified, castle and town, for his defence, or rather for that of his minion. The personages chiefly concerned in this attempt were the Earl of Mar and the Master of Glammis, two of those who had acted in the Ruthven conspiracy, and who had since chiefly remained in England; the Earl of Angus, who had joined these two in their late ineffectual attempt upon Stirling; the Lords Claud and John Hamilton,

who had been forfeited and banished by Morton, for quite an opposite sort of treason, that of befriending Queen Mary, but whom a similarity of circumstances led to join the present plot; Lord Maxwell; the Earls of Bothwell and Athole; and the Lairds of Tullibardine, Buccleuch, Cessford, Cowdenknowe, and Drumlanrig.

It is curious to observe the variety of reasons which the different members of this confederacy had for being in hostile array against the King. The general object was professedly the patriotic one of driving an evil counseller out of the King's presence, and establishing a popular government. There could not, however, be the least uniformity of purpose between the Hamiltons, loyal to Queen Mary, and the Earls of Mar and Athole, the early friends of James. It is inconceivable, that the Earl of Bothwell (the King's cousin by descent from an illegitimate son of James V.) had any other reason for his appearance in arms, than the simple one, love of a fray or that strange turbulence of disposition by which he was characterized. But the strangest exception from the general purpose was in Lord Maxwell. He had recently had a dreadful feud with his local foe the Laird of Johnston, and had caused that gentleman's house of Lochwood to be burnt, purely, as was said in derision, to let the lady of the mansion "have light to set her hood [perform her toilette] in the morning." His object in joining the present expedition—which he did with three hundred foot and seven hundred horse—was merely to force a pardon from the King for that and other such misdeeds.

But, however discordant the real motives of the conspirators, they had sufficient prudence to work

unanimously towards one conclusion. As they advanced, they published a declaration of their intentions, the chief of which were, to defend what they styled the true religion, to deliver the King from corrupt counsellors, and to preserve amity with England. How Lord Maxwell, with his Catholic vassals, consented to this edict, it is difficult to conceive; but certain it is, his Protestant associates made little scruple to take advantage of his company, going as he was on the same errand with themselves. They were only a little scandalised at his giving out the watch-word of "St Andrew" to the army on the night when they lay at Falkirk. Such was the good effect of their declamation in stirring up the people in their favour, that on reaching St Ninians, within a mile of Stirling, they had an army of about ten thousand men, while Arran could only garrison Stirling with a small band of mercenaries, and the adherents of the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, two noblemen who adhered to him on account of his protecting them from certain criminal prosecutions.

During the night betwixt the last of October and the first of November, Arran, Montrose, and Crawford, kept an anxious watch upon the walls. Early in the morning, by a preconcerted design, the confederated army advanced upon the town in three detachments, two of which were to make feigned attacks on different parts of the walls to attract the attention of the besieged, while the third poured its force upon one of the gates, which was considered a weak point. An entrance being soon gained in this manner, little remained to do but to disperse the terror-struck bands of the besieged. Arran no sooner saw the enemy make

entrance, than, giving all up for lost, he galloped out of the town by the opposite side; crossed the Forth by the bridge, the gate of which he locked behind him, throwing the keys into the river; and fled northward, almost unattended. The Earls of Montrose and Crawford, with others of his friends, then retired into the castle, to take refuge with the King. Arran's brother, William Stewart, endeavoured for a while to contend the streets with the assailants, but was soon compelled to yield. His obstinacy had only the effect of causing some of the troops of the confederates to be wounded by their own companions; for, strange to say, the Scotch harquebussiers were so awkward in their mode of fighting, as to fire indiscriminately, it would appear, on friend and foe. One of their leaders, on being told that some had fallen in this way, coolly remarked, that, if these unfortunate persons had known his troop as well as he did, they would have taken care how they went before it. But, upon the whole, wonderfully little blood was shed in achieving this important revolution of the Scottish cabinet. One Hamilton of Inchmachan, who had lately sworn away the lives of Cunningham of Drumquhassel and Douglas of Maine, was seized as he was attempting to escape over the walls of the castle, and slain in cold blood by Johnston of Westerhall. But even this man's chief, Lord Hamilton, acknowledged that he had got nothing more than he deserved. Perhaps the only circumstance which disgraced the enterprise, was the conduct of the borderers. These gentlemen lost not a moment after they had gained possession of the town, in breaking open the shops, houses, and stables, which they rifled of every thing of value.

In the performance of this task, it was matter of amusement to all, how quickly they wrenched aside the stanchions which the habitual caution of the Stirling merchants had interposed between them and their prey. However, they did not enrich themselves very much with what they got in the booths of Stirling, this being a town, says Spottiswoode, 'not very rich in merchandise.' They received their principal gratification from the stables, in which they found a great number of horses, the property of the courtiers. Upon these they immediately galloped away towards their own country.

Having secured the town, the enterprisers advanced to the front of the castle, where they planted their banners. They knew that the King would not be able to hold out long against them, for the castle at this time was quite unprovided for defence, and was not furnished with provisions for above one day. Accordingly, they next morning received a message from the King, by their friends the Secretary Maitland and Justice-Clerk Bellenden, requesting assurances for a parley. Having granted this, they were soon honoured with a formal embassy in the person of the Master of Gray, who professed to demand what they wanted in thus appearing in arms before their sovereign. After a conference which lasted an hour, Gray retired with a report of their wishes, which, as may be supposed, was presented in terms abundantly favourable. The King was still unwilling to submit; for, although he perhaps had no sincere affection for Arran, he regarded these his enemies with a degree of fear. He sent out a new message, importing that, if they sought only life, land, and goods, he

would willingly grant them their request, provided that they instantly dispersed. To this, however, they would not yield. Nor would they agree to a proposal which James then offered to them, for guaranteeing the lives of his late counsellors. He was at last obliged, by want of victuals, to submit without any terms whatever.

The gates being then opened, the lords were admitted to see the King, before whom they at once fell down upon their knees, and solicited pardon for their enterprise. James at first talked very big, called them traitors, and seemed as if about to order them to the gibbet. This, however, was only to maintain the theory of his dignity. He soon assumed a calmer tone. In respect, he said, of their misfortunes, and in hope of their better behaviour for the future, he would remit their offences; the more so, that their proceedings had been marked by little bloodshed. To Lord Hamilton, who was their spokesman, in consideration of his blood, he talked with peculiar kindness. "My lord," he said, "I did never see you before, and must confess that of all this company you have been most wronged. You were a faithful servant to the Queen my mother in the time of my minority, and were then, when I understood not as I now do the estate of things, hardly used." [James, it must be understood, always favoured those who had fought for his mother, more than those who had fought for himself, not perhaps from affection for her, but that he thought them the best friends to monarchy in general. He confesses, in his Basilicon Doron, that he ever found the former his best friends after he grew up.] "The rest of you," he continued, "who have been since that

time exiled, and put from your livings, cannot say but it was your own fault. But," turning himself to Bothwell, "What should have moved thee, Francis, to take this course, and come in arms against me? Did I ever do thee any wrong? or what cause hadst thou to offend? I wish thee a more quiet spirit, and that thou mayst learn to live as a subject; otherwise thou shalt fall in trouble."

Some attempted to explain more fully the reasons which had induced them to take this violent course with his Majesty. But he interrupted them. "There is no need of words," said he; "weapons have already spoken well enough. I am satisfied, as I think you did not mean harm to my person, to give you all both my hand and my heart; and I will remember nothing that is past, provided you carry yourselves henceforth as becomes men of your places, and behave yourselves as dutiful subjects." Having said so much to vindicate the integrity of his kingly prerogative, he permitted them to rise and kiss his hand. The Earl of Arran was then proclaimed traitor at the Cross of Stirling; the Earls of Montrose and Crawford were put under confinement in the charge of Lord Hamilton; and the king's guard was entirely changed. Afterwards, a formal pardon was granted to the lords, who, of course, became James's new counsellors. In a Parliament which was held at Linlithgow on the 4th of December, this remission was confirmed, and at the same time a reversion of their attainders was granted, including that of the late Earl of Gowrie. Along with the lords thus restored, were restored those ministers who had fled from the violence of Arran's government to England.

Thus ended the Raid of Stirling, an event of immense importance to King James, because it finally rescued him from the evil counsellors who beset his youth, and secured his government upon that good understanding with England, and that general moderation of principle, which were necessary for attracting to his person the affections of the great people whom he was destined to govern. After this, the country seems to have remained for a considerable time in a state of tranquillity, and even happiness, except so far as it was disturbed by the demands of the clergy, which were much too exorbitant to be at once granted, even after their friends had become the chief counsellors around the King. This matter, however, was at length settled in such a way as to make them comparatively peaceful.

The reader, perhaps, may desire to know the final fate of Arran. It was sufficiently in unison with the reckless nature of his life. For two years he lived in perfect seclusion among his friends in the wilder parts of Ayrshire, his style reduced from that of Earl of Arran to his original title of Captain James Stewart, for the peerage was restored to its proper owners, the Hamiltons, immediately after the affair of Stirling. At length, in 1587, the success which his brother met with in impeaching the Master of Gray, induced him to send a letter to the King, charging Maitland, his successor in the King's favour, with high crimes and misdemeanours; which attempt, however, met with no success; for, being ordered to enter into ward at Linlithgow Palace, to wait the result of Maitland's trial, with the prospect of being himself impeached as a sower of sedition, in-

case of his charges being disproved, he thought proper to withhold himself from so dangerous an experiment. After this he was obliged to seek a more remote and secure place of refuge, Bewly in Roeshire, where his wife had a few friends, and a small piece of property. In 1596, when the death of Maitland, and an imprudent act on the part of the clergy, seemed to open a new prospect to him, he once more approached the King, with whom he had a long conference at Holyroodhouse. James was still disposed to befriend him; but till a proper opportunity of advancing him should occur, it was thought expedient that he should retire to the strong holds of his friends in Ayrshire. He accordingly repaired, with a small party, towards that district of country. As he was passing the village of Symington in Lanarkshire, a friend told him that it would be prudent for him to ride a little less ostentatiously, as James Douglas of Torthorwald, nephew to the late Morton, lived in the immediate neighbourhood, and was still inclined to be avenged of his uncle's death, which Stewart was known to have chiefly promoted. He replied, that he would not leave his road, or assume a disguise, for him, nor for any of the name of Douglas. But he soon found occasion to repent of his rashness. His words being reported to Torthorwald, that proud baron immediately took horse, and pursued him with three servants. Stewart was riding through the curious artificial-looking pass of Catslack, which communicates between Clydesdale and Ayrshire, when, looking back, he espied Torthorwald riding after him full speed. He immediately inquired the name of the strange place in which he was. Being informed it was Catslack, he hurried on

with evident trepidation, and gave orders to his retainers to follow as fast as they could; for he had received a response from witches in his days of power to beware of a cat, and he now judged from the name of the pass, that the dangerous moment had approached. His retainers, perhaps aware of this, and therefore despairing of any efforts they might make to defend him, abandoned him to his fate. He was immediately overtaken, tumbled from his horse, and killed by the avenging hand of Douglas. His body being then dragged aside, his head was taken off, and carried away by Torthorwald, while the carcass, thrown into a ditch, was left to be eaten up by dogs and swine. His head was fixed upon a spear, and planted on the walls of Torthorwald Castle, in Dumfrieshire, to the fulfilment, as the superstitious of that day failed not to remark, of another witch's prophecy, which promised that his head should be exalted above those of all the men of his time.

No legal cognizance was ever taken of his slaughter. He was esteemed a sort of moral outcast, quite unworthy of the notice of the laws.

It is necessary here to resort to some circumstances connected with the domestic life of James, which have been omitted in order to preserve the political narrative unbroken. In September 1582, when under the restraint of the Ruthven conspirators, he lost his tutor Buchanan. A certain stain seems to lie on the memory of James, at least in the estimation of some writers, for his never having expressed what they think a sufficient degree of reverence for so distinguished a preceptor, and for his having permitted the body of his old master, who died poor, to be buried at the ex-

pense of the city of Edinburgh. The gratitude of James to Buchanan, ought, according to these writers, to have been boundless, and should have regarded no check which the manners or the political prejudices of the man might have imposed upon it. Surely, however, those who think so, do not measure James's character by the ordinary standard of human nature. Buchanan, in his relation to James, was not a teacher chosen by a pupil from a preference on the part of the said pupil, but a stern governor and task-master, imposed upon him by a party without regard to his own eventual or probable wishes. James had every abstract reason, from the general circumstances of the case, not to speak of those which depended on the individual character of the master, for beholding him with aversion. It is needless to expatiate on these reasons—the malign feeling which the stoic cherished regarding his mother—his intimacy with all who had fought against the royal family—the nature and origin of the commission he had over his pupil, or his inflexible severity of temper—James must have been more than an angel, or less than a man, if he had ever been thoroughly reconciled to such a person. As for the charge regarding Buchanan's poverty and his eleemosynary funeral, that may be best answered by pointing to the list of lucrative offices and endowments which he enjoyed during life, and by reminding the reader that, at the time of his death, James was in confinement, and unable to exhibit any mark of respect for his corpse.

Some light is cast on this matter by James's own writings. Among the instructions which he gives to his son in the Basilicon Doron, he directs

him to consider the propagation of calumnies regarding his parents and ancestors, as among the offences which he should scarcely pardon; evidently an allusion to his own feelings in regard to Buchanan's history. At another place, where he recommends to his son a careful study of the history of his own country, he anxiously says, "I mean not such infamous invectives as Buchanan and Knox's Chronicles; if any of which remain to your days, use the law upon the keepers thereof; for in that point I would have you a Pythagorist, and think that the very spirits of these archibellouses of rebellion have made transition into them that hoard their works or maintain their opinions, punishing them even as it were their authors risen again." Indeed, convinced as the King must have been of his mother's innocence, he would have been the most contemptible slave on earth, if he could have ever entertained a sincere friendship for the man who had so ungratefully, so unprovokedly, and so wickedly traduced her.

In 1584, when eighteen years of age, the King made his first appearance as an author. His work was a small thin quarto, entitled, 'Essayes of a Prentice in the divine art of Poesie, with the Rewlis and Cautelis to be pursued and avoided.'

It consisted partly of poetry and partly of prose. The chief poems are a series of Sonnets to the Gods, in all probability the result of the King's exercises in versification under Buchanan. The prose part of the work is a code of laws for the construction of verse according to the ideas of that age. There is something odd enough in this association, the laying down of rules being rather

the proper business of an experienced master than of an apprentice. Yet, the whole work is respectable. The poetry, it is true, contains none of the hair-brained sentimental graces which we look for in modern verse, contains no striking descriptions of external nature, no treasures from the far recesses of thought, no forceful exhibitions of passion, no joyful or melancholy ponderings on the fate and character of man, such as we find in almost every thing now written under the name of poetry. 'There is no evidence,' says Mr Gillies, introducing a new edition of King James's Essays, 'that he ever loved or hated, rejoiced or suffered like a poet.' But the truth is, King James wrote according to the taste of his own age, not of the present. Judging his compositions by those of his contemporaries—the only way in which they ought to be judged—they appear very good. The poems of Montgomery, Hume, and others, whose names are preserved as the poetic ornaments of his Scottish court, are as unsuitable to the taste of the present generation as those of their royal patron. When the years of the writer are considered, they are entitled to be called wonderful. To write at eighteen, with a proper understanding of the selection and collocation of words, whether there be ideas at the same time or not, is no small merit. And such merit is surely to be allowed to the author of the following poem, which is found at the end of the poetical department of the book;

ANE SCHORT POEME OF TYME.

As I was pansing in a morning aire,
And could not sleip nor nawyis take me resi,

Furth for to walk, the morning was so faire,
  Athort the fields, it seemed to me the best.
  The East was cleare, whereby belyve I gest
That fyrie Titan cumming was in sight,
Obscuring chaste Diana by his light.

Who by his rising in the azure skyes,
  Did dewlie helse all thame on earth do dwell.
The balmie dew through birning drouth he dryis,
  Which made the soile to savour sweit and smell,
  By dew that on the night before downe fell,
Which then was soukit up by the Delphienus heit
Up in the aire: it was so light and weit.

Whose hie ascending in his purpour chere
  Provokit all from Morpheus to flee:
As beasts to feid, and birds to sing with beir,
  Men to their labour, bissie as the bee:
  Yet idle men devysing did I see,
How for to drive the tyme that did theim irk,
By sindrie pastymes, quhile that it grew mirk.

Then woundred I to see them seik a wyle,
  So willingly the precious tyme to tine:
And how they did themselfis so farr begyle,
  To fushe of tyme, which of itself is fyne.
  Fra tyme be past to call it backwart syne
Is bot in vaine: therefore men sould be warr,
To sleuth the tyme that flees fra them so farr.

For what hath man bot tyme into this lyfe,
  Which gives him dayis his God aright to know?
Wherefore then sould we be at sic a stryfe,
  So spedelie our selfis for to withdraw
  Evin from the tyme, which is on nowayes slaw

To flie from us, suppose we fled it noght?
More wyse we were, if we the tyme had soght.

But sen that tyme is sic a precious thing,
  I wald we sould bestow it into that
Which were most pleasour to our heavenly King.
  Flee ydilteth, which is the greatest lat;
  Bot sen that death to all is destinat,
Let us employ that tyme that God hath send us,
In doing weill, that good men may commend us.

CHAPTER IV.

THE KING'S CONDUCT REGARDING HIS MOTHER AT HER EXECUTION.

1585—1587.

One of the most difficult and trying circumstances in James's early life, was his situation in regard to his mother—she a Catholic, a suspected murderess, a deposed and imprisoned queen, and he educated a Protestant, and forced, whether he would or not, to be the usurper of her throne. Separated from her at the age of ten months, and living ever since under the charge of her enemies, it was impossible that he could feel towards her the ordinary sensations of a son in regard to a mother: he could entertain no warmer feeling on the subject, than one of vague respect for a personage who, he was told, had brought him into the world, and whom one of the commandments enjoined him to reverence; a sentiment too general, and too much the effect of a mere idea of duty, to approach to filial affection.

No intercourse whatever took place betwixt James and his mother till he fell under the control of his favourites. A messenger who came to Stirling Castle during Morton's period of power,

bearing presents from Mary, and a letter addressed to the *Prince of Scotland*, was turned back without being permitted to approach the King. Lennox and Arran induced him afterwards to enter into a negotiation with her, for associating her in the government with himself; which scheme, although adverse to the Protestant interests, was by no means without its merits, since it would probably have pacified the Catholic part of the British population, and checked the dangerous machinations of those continental princes who were so perpetually plotting against Queen Elizabeth for the restoration of Mary. But the Raid of Stirling, which put him into the hands of a thoroughly Protestant nobility, rendered it impossible for James any longer to remain on friendly terms with his mother. Soon after that event, June 1586, he was induced to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with Elizabeth, whereby he bound himself to assist her in defending the British isle from the threatened invasions of the French and Spaniards, and to assist her in resenting any injury which might be offered to her by certain persons, among whom his mother was included by implication; the secret reward for such a sweeping compliance being a pension of five thousand pounds a year, presented under the light of a compensation for the English estate of the Countess of Lennox, his paternal grandmother, but with a hint that it was the proper allowance for the heir of the English crown. James was at once compelled and tempted to throw himself into the Protestant scale against his mother, and did some things which it is to be wished, for his honour as a man, he had not done. He pardoned—he even gave

countenance and employment to a churchman named Archibald Douglas, who was known to have been concerned in his father's death. He also wrote a letter to his mother, in which he positively refused to acknowledge her to be Queen of Scotland, and disclaimed having any community of interests with her. No doubt, both of these actions were matters of political necessity, and were done for the purpose of promoting the interests of the Reformation, in opposition to the Catholics. But, on the other hand, it is precisely these things, and such as these, which supply the Catholics with counter charges of cruelty and want of principle against the Protestants, and which tend so much to place both dogmas on a level, in the eyes of the unprejudiced, in regard to their comparative influence over human conduct.

James's disrespectful letter occasioned a pang in Mary's bosom, such as her worst misfortunes, perhaps, had failed to inflict. She, of course, had greater reason to regard him with maternal tenderness, than he had to regard her with filial respect. Her bosom must have remembered the pressure of his infant form, while he, never having had perception of her embraces, could have no similar reason for recalling her image with emotions of tenderness. She felt his unkindness with the acutest pain. 'Was it for this,' said she, in a letter to the French ambassador, written with that elegance, fluency, and force of expression, peculiar to her, and which place her compositions a-head of all English prose literature before the time of Bolingbroke; 'was it for this that I have endured so much, in order to preserve to him the inheritance to which I have a just right? I am far from

carrying his authority in Scotland. I desire no power there; nor wish to set my foot in that kingdom, if it were not for the pleasure of once embracing a son whom I have hitherto loved with tender affection. Whatever he either enjoys or expects, he derived it from me. From him I never received assistance, supply, or benefit of any kind. Let not my allies treat him any longer as a king: he holds that dignity by my consent; and if a speedy repentance do not appease my just resentment, I will load him with a parent's curse, and surrender my crown, with all my pretensions, to one who will receive them with gratitude, and defend them with vigour.'

It is believed to be probable, that she proceeded some length with a design of putting this threat into execution, and that she was eventually prevented from doing so by learning, that James had only acted from a necessity which he could not well control.

The time was now approaching, when this eminent person was to complete the extraordinary measure of her misfortunes by a violent death. The exertions which her Catholic friends had made in her favour ever since her imprisonment, and the threats which, both in their national and individual capacities, they had fulminated against her oppressor Elizabeth, were the causes of this lamentable catastrophe. Her existence at last seemed incompatible with that of the Protestant religion in Britain; for it was perceived that, so long as she lived, the enemies of the Reformation would never want a rallying-point and a watch-cry. At this very juncture, Spain was mustering her formidable *Armada*, with the certain purpose of in-

vading Britain, and exterminating the Protestant faith. Is it to be allowed, said the English, that the existence of our sovereign, our government, and our religion, should be endangered by one person, whom we have it in our power to destroy? The *fairness* which so conspicuously characterizes the English mind, might have disposed them to question the propriety of sacrificing an innocent person, and a stranger who had fled to them for refuge, to even so violent a cause of expediency as this; but there are two cases in which the English have never been able to think with their habitual generosity—their commerce and their religion. In these matters they have hitherto been so utterly selfish and exclusive, as to render their national character highly anomalous in the eyes of foreigners, and even of Scotsmen.

In compliance with the wishes of the nation, but much more in compliance with her own malignant passions, Elizabeth consented to tarnish the glory of her reign by putting Mary to death. With an express and far-casting view to this event, she had procured, in 1585, an act of Parliament empowering her to try, and pursue to death, any person who should thenceforth be either the *cause* or the *object* of a plot against her. Thus she rendered Mary liable not only for her own crimes, but also for those of others—for the guilt of any rash individual who, of his own will, might choose to act in her favour against Elizabeth. This being made law, it was easy for the English ministers to cause a few headstrong young men, the chief of whom was the noted Anthony Babington, to engage in a conspiracy against her. They were seized and executed. Mary was then accused of

accession to their crime; and, as all exculpatory evidence had been destroyed with the conspirators, no difficulty was found in condemning her. The sentence passed upon her was warmly approved by Parliament, and by the English nation at large; and Elizabeth was importuned on all hands to consent to her execution. For a long time she hesitated to sanction a deed so violent, so unexampled, and which might afterwards be esteemed so infamous. Not that she scrupled at the bare idea of destroying a kinswoman, or a fellow-creature; but that she dreaded what loss in good name, or what more substantial evil, might accrue to herself, in consequence of such a deed. Her hesitation was that of the cool murderer, who only pauses to consider what mode of death will make least show upon the exterior of the corpse, or upon his own hands, and so be least apt to cause his own detection. She was willing that some one of the keepers of her victim should take the guilt off her hands by secret assassination. The Earl of Leicester, her favourite for the time, proposed this in open council; and she herself gave broad but ineffectual hints to her agents to have it executed. That such an idea should have been entertained by this great princess, and thought fit for discussion at her council board, certainly gives a striking view of the barbarism which still clung to the best ranks of English society, not to speak of Scottish, at the end of the sixteenth century.

It was not James's interest to throw any obstacle in the way of his mother's execution. She was the rival of his title; in the eyes of many of his subjects, she was the sovereign, and he an usurper. In the event of her escaping, and being

placed by the Catholics on the English throne; which was looked upon at that juncture as by no means impossible, he might calculate upon being disinherited for his Protestantism and his usurpation of Scotland, and even perhaps on being dispossessed of that northern monarchy. On the other hand, by her death, he was secured in enjoyment of the Scottish throne, Elizabeth in that of England; and an open course was left for his succeeding, in the fulness of years, to that enviable seat, which had been in a manner promised him by Elizabeth, on his signing the late treaty.

To place interest, however, in opposition to affection, in a case like this, was more than man could do. James, though practically unacquainted with the tender relation of parent and child, had a great reverence (which characterized him through life) for at least the image of his parents. He was also keenly alive to the horror, as well as the infamy, of having a near relation subjected to a public and ignominious death. He therefore made all the exertions which circumstances admitted of to prevent the catastrophe.

These exertions were necessarily of an awkward and constrained kind. Hampered as he was by his Protestant relations, by his Protestant court and clergy, himself in very deed existing by sufferance of the English queen, in what terms or manner was he to solicit that princess for the life of his mother? Had he now been in enjoyment of one of those intervals of absolute power which his favourites were able to procure for him, he might have perhaps written his petition on the skins of the warriors who guarded the north of England. But, bound down under the control

of an oligarchy, the members of which were the enemies of his mother and the minions of Elizabeth, how was he to proceed? Surrounded at Holyroodhouse rather by a guard than a court, what had he to advise with but his own solitary heart—what had he to send across the Border but the eloquence of its affections?

It was early in November 1586 that the news of Mary's trial and sentence reached Edinburgh. James immediately selected William Keith, a gentleman of his court, to carry a letter to Elizabeth, remonstrating against the proceedings. 'It would have seemed strange to him,' so ran this letter, 'if his nobility and counsellers had ever taken it upon them to give sentence upon a queen of England or one of its blood-royal, how much more strange, then, would it appear to him, if she (Elizabeth) should stain her hands with the blood of his mother, who was of the same royal condition with her self, the same sex, and her kinswoman! He could not bring himself to believe that it would ever enter her heart to do a thing so violent, so unnatural. But, if it should be so, then he desired her to consider how much it touched him in honour, as a king, and as a son, to permit his mother, an absolute prince, to be put to an infamous death.'

Elizabeth returned no answer to this letter; but, about the end of the month, Keith sent intelligence to Edinburgh, that notwithstanding his remonstrance, and that of a French ambassador, who had come to London for the same purpose, the death of Queen Mary was more certainly determined on in the English council than before. James instantly wrote a letter of instruction to

Keith, expressed in terms as much more sharp than his late epistle to Elizabeth, as the danger was now more imminent. * He at the same time called

* This letter is worthy of being now put into print, as going far to testify James's sincere desire of saving his mother. It is from Wodrow's MSS., Advocates' Library.

'I perceive by your last letters, the Queen, my mother, continueth still in that miserable streight that the pretended condemnation of that Parliament has put her in; a strange example indeed, and so very rare, as for my part I never heard nor read of the like practice in such a case. I am sorry, that by my expectation the Queen hath suffered this to proceed so far to my dishonour, and so contrary to her good fame, as by subject's mouth to condemn a sovereign prince, descended of all hands of the best blood in Europe. King Henry the VIII.'s reputation was never prejudged in any thing, but in the beheading of his bed-fellow; but yet that tragedy was far inferior to this, if it should proceed as it seemeth to be intended, which I can never believe, since I know it to be the nature of noble princes at that time chiefly to spare when it is most concluded in all mens' minds that they will strike. Always, I am presently upon the directing of a very honourable ambassade thither for the same purpose, in which commission shall be one man that the Queen will well like of, and who both hath and deserveth great credit at her hand; and therefore fail not to insist with the Queen, that all farther may be stayed while (*till*) their arrival, which shall be as speedy as possibly they may post thither. This far I promise to myself will be granted, since I no way merit at that Queen's hands such hard usage as to disdain to hear my overture and reasons, which when she hath heard she may weigh as best pleaseth her. Fail not to let her see all this letter, and would to God she might see the inward parts of my heart, where she would see a great jewel of honesty towards her lockt up in a coffer of perplexity, she only having the key, which by her good behaviour in that case may open the same. Chuse ye in what streight my honour will be, this unhap being perfected—since, before God, I already dare skath go abroad for crying out of the whole people. And what is spoken by them of the Queen of England it grieves me to hear, and yet

a convention of the whole estates of his kingdom, to meet on the 15th of December, for the purpose of appointing regular ambassadors to treat with the queen for his mother's preservation.

Keith, on receiving the King's instructions, renewed his entreaty for a delay of the proceedings against Mary. But he found Elizabeth deaf to his request. He then showed her the terms on which James had desired his mind to be expressed to her, in case of her rejecting his petition. These terms were not very gentle. They denounced the deed which she contemplated, as against the laws of God, which prohibit all injury to his Anointed Ones, and as equally against the laws of nations, which protect a sovereign from being judged by subjects. They reminded her of the dangerous example which such a deed would place before the eyes of the European nations, already too much disposed, in consequence of the license given to public opinion by the Reformation, to question the unimpeachability of their sovereigns. They finally avowed the necessity under which he would lie, of taking such revenge for his mother's death, as comported with his feelings as a son, and his dignity as a king.

Elizabeth absolutely stormed at this bold remonstrance; and, if her counsellors had not taken some pains to allay her rage, she would have turn-

dare not find fault with it, except I would dethrone myself, so is whole Scotland incensed with this matter. As ye love your master's honour, omit no diligence in this request. And let this letter serve for excuse to the Queen, my dearest sister, of my not writing to her at this time, in respect of this bearer's sudden departure. Farewell.

'JAMES R.'

ed the Scottish king's messenger from her presence, with insult instead of reply. When she had become somewhat calm, she said she would give no answer in anger, and would think of it till next morning. At the time specified, she told Keith "that no precipitation should be used; but she would wait till next time she should hear from the king; after which she hoped some arrangement might be made for saving the life of the Queen of Scots."

James was much pleased and mollified with this answer. Conceiving hopes that a gentle course would be effectual, he sent a second letter to the Queen, in which, after endeavouring to palliate the sharp terms of his instructions to Keith, and making every allowance for her Majesty's feelings and policy, he promised immediately to send ambassadors to treat with her regarding his mother.

At the convention, which met in the middle of December, he found his subjects much better disposed than he could have expected, to sympathize with him in his wish to preserve his mother. The truth is, though the Scotch still detested Mary as much as ever for her Catholicism and her suspected criminality, they felt a little offended at the idea of a member of their royal family being put to an unfair death by the English. They accordingly voted James a considerable sum to fit out his ambassadors.

The King having selected the Master of Gray and Sir Robert Melvill of Mordecairny, to serve him in this capacity, they left Edinburgh on the 20th of December, and reached London on the 30th. On the 1st of January, after some difficulties they were admitted to the presence of Elizabeth,

She at first received them with rudeness, alluded to the instructions given to Keith, and asked if they had been sent with the like threats. On their reminding her, however, of the apology which the King had made for those instructions, and informing her that theirs were of a different tenor, she broke forth into a speech full of amicable professions, intimating that she had agitated every sort of scheme for preserving the life of the Queen of Scots, but that, to her infinite sorrow, she found it could not be, consistently with her own safety and the good of her people. They replied, that the case was surely not so desperate but that they might hope to give her assurance for her life by other means. But, observing her anger to be excited by what they said, they were obliged to withdraw without entering more deeply into the object of their mission.

At their next audience, on the 10th of January, she began the conference, by saying, in her coquettish way, "A thing long looked for should be good when it comes—I would like to hear what your King offers." The Master of Gray answered, "No man makes offer, but for some cause; if it like your Majesty, we desire to know if the person be extant for whom we offer." [This was said in consequence of a rumour that the queen had already been put to death.] "*As yet*," said Elizabeth, "*I think she be; but I will not promise an hour.*"

"Nay," said Gray, "we come not to shift, but to offer from our sovereign whatsoever in reason can be required—specially that he shall interpose his credit in behalf of his mother, and give the chief of his nobility for pledges, that no plot nor

practice shall be contrived against your Majesty with her knowledge or privity. If that be not sufficient, provided that it please your Majesty to set her at liberty, and send her into Scotland, a course shall be taken for securing your Majesty from all attempts on her account whatsoever."

Elizabeth, calling the Earl of Leicester and other Lords who were near her, repeated these offers to them, with expressions of contempt; which caused the Master of Gray to ask abruptly what could induce any man to plot against her Majesty in behalf of the Queen of Scots. She answered, that the Catholics would do so, because Mary was a papist, and they expected her to succeed to the throne. "And if these means be taken away," said the Master of Gray, "apparently the danger will cease." "That," said the Queen, "I would be glad to understand." The Master answered, That "if the right of succession were made over by Queen Mary to her son, which he believed she would do, then the Catholics would have no more hope, and there would be no more danger." "But she hath no right," said Elizabeth, "for she is declared incapable of succession." "If she have no right," replied Gray, "the hope of the papists is already at an end, and it is not to be feared that they will enterprise for her." "But the Papists," said Elizabeth, "do not allow our declaration." "Then let it fall," rejoined Gray, "in the King's person by her resignation."

The Earl of Leicester here objected, that Mary was a prisoner, and could not legally resign her title. The Master answered, that "the demission being made to her son, and with the advice of all her friends in Europe, in case by any attempt the

Queen (Elizabeth) were cut off, she would have none to partake with her against her son, all the princes her friends standing obliged that her resignation should be valid and effectual in his favour." But this ingenious reasoning bore too closely on the delicate point of the succession to be agreeable to Elizabeth. She affected not to understand what the Master meant; and Leicester explained it as proposing that James should come in his mother's place. "Is it so?" said the queen, "Then I put myself in worse case than before. By God's passion, [her usual oath], that were to cut my own throat, and for a duchy or an earldom to yourself, you or such as you would cause some of your desperate knaves kill me. Tell your King what I have done for him to keep the crown on his head since he was born, and that, for my part, I mind to keep the league that stands betwixt us; which, if he break, it shall be a double fault." With these words, she moved away. Sir Robert Melvill, following her, requested at least a respite of eight days for the unhappy queen. But her ear was deaf to entreaty, and she only uttered the emphatic sentence, "Not an hour."

When James was informed of this conference, and that nothing but extremity was to be expected, he wrote a letter with his own hand to the Master of Gray, commanding him to renew the threats which he had formerly conveyed in his instructions to William Keith. 'Reserve yourself na langer,' so proceeds this brief but earnest epistle; 'reserve yourself na langer in your dealing for my mother, for you have done it too long; and think not that any thing will do good if her life be lost; for then adieu with my dealing with theime that are the

special instruments thairof. Thairfore, if you look for the continuance of my favour towartis you, spare na pains nor plainnes in this cace, but read my letter wrettin to William Keith, and conform yourself quhollie to the contentis thairof; and in this requeist let me reap the fruicts of your great credit there, ather now or never.'

But Elizabeth knew too well the weakness of the Scottish monarch to be much affected by his threats. She also guessed, perhaps, that, however much natural affection, or an idea of moral duty, might agitate him at present, a sense of his own interest must subdue him into his wonted obedience, so soon as the first heat of his feelings should have gone off. In order to soften the blow as much as possible, she caused her minister, Leicester, to write an anonymous letter to the King, expressing the surprise which all the principal men in England, and throughout Protestant Europe in general, felt at his exertions in favour of his mother, whose life was so manifestly adverse to his own interests, as well as to those of the true religion. It is now also ascertained, that the Master of Gray, while assuring James, by frequent despatches, of the earnest zeal with which he laboured to mollify Elizabeth towards Mary, secretly urged her to the execution, reminding her of the proverb, that the dead cannot bite; and alleging that his master, in reality, was not sorry that his mother should be put out of the way.

It was no doubt in concert with this unworthy officer, that, in the latter part of January, she gave a contumelious dismissal to himself and his associate in embassy. As soon as James learned that they had been unsuccessful, and that the death

of his mother seemed to be sealed, he called back his ambassadors, and, as the last resource within his power, appointed a prayer to be said for her by the clergy. The form of this prayer was the simplest possible;—'that it might please God to illuminate her with the light of his truth, and save her from the apparent danger wherein she was.' Yet, because she was a Catholic, and because the Scottish clergy feared every thing in the shape of a set prayer, as tending to invade their precious privilege of 'moralizing on the time' in their extempore effusions, they universally refused to perform this little office of humanity for a fellow-creature in unexampled distress; at once insulting their sovereign and human nature. James, touched in his innermost heart by their unkindness, appointed Patrick Adamson, Archbishop of St Andrews, distinguished as one of the most learned scholars and best poets of his time, to preach on the 3d of February in the principal church of the capital, and to remember the Queen in his prayers. The King probably thought that he might at least have the appointed office performed in the church where he himself usually sat; yet, even in this object, an attempt was made by the clergy to disappoint him.

There was something ludicrous in the scene which took place in the High Church, in consequence of this insolence; at least, it appears ludicrous in the eyes of a different age. When the King entered his seat, he found the pulpit possessed, not by his complying friend the Archbishop, but by a pert young coxcomb of the name of Cowper, who was not yet invested with the orders of a clergyman, but who, according to the licentious

custom of the Scottish church in that age, was nevertheless permitted to exercise his functions, and even to take a part in the regular routine of duties, in the principal church of Edinburgh. Seeing that an insult was intended, but at the same time willing to avoid a collision with men whom he had so much reason to fear, James called out, "Master John [the usual way of designating a clergyman in his time], that place was destinat for another; you must come down." Cowper answered, that he had come prepared to preach, it being his ordinary day, and, if it were his Majesty's will, "he would fain do God's work." The King replied, "I will not hear you this day: I command you to come down, and let Mr Patrick Adamson come up and preach." Still Cowper parlied for permission to remain where he was; till at last the King good-naturedly said, that, since he was there, he might go on, provided he would obey the charge, and pray for his mother. To this Cowper replied, that he would do as the spirit of God should direct him; when James, well knowing what effects would result from such a pseudo-inspiration, peremptorily commanded him to descend. At that moment, the King's guard advancing to enforce his orders, Cowper gave a thump on the pulpit with his fist, and told the King that "that day should witness against him in the great day of the Lord." He then descended, exclaiming, in the true style of a Presbyterian seer of the time, "Woe be to thee, O Edinburgh, for the last of thy plagues shall be worse than the first." The people, who were in the habit of paying a sincere and senseless regard to every thing which fell from their preachers,

uttered a loud and universal howl at this denunciation, and rose up to leave the church along with their favourite divine. James was so indignant at their conduct, as to rise up and cry, "What devil ails the people, that they will not tarry to hear a man preach?" But they all went out, leaving only himself, his courtiers, and a few of the nobility and gentry. Adamson now got into the pulpit, and preached an eloquent, and at the same time most inoffensive discourse, from a text in Timothy enjoining Christians to pray for all men. When he was done, James was under the necessity of conveying him to the palace with his own guard, to save him from the vengeance of the multitude. Cowper, who had preached elsewhere to the crowd which left the church in his train, was that afternoon imprisoned, by order of the Privy Council, in Blackness; while two other ministers of Edinburgh, for insolent language used at his examination, were deposed temporarily from their offices. A more unhappy instance is not upon record, of the cheap boldness displayed by the early Scotch preachers; for here their war is not altogether against the authority of their sovereign, which forms a specious excuse for them in so many other instances, but against the best and most generally recognised of the natural affections.*

Elizabeth eventually managed the execution with a great deal of regard to the feelings of King James. She contrived, by her boggling and her juggling, to dissipate, as it were, the effects of

* Spottiswoode, 354.—Moyses, 115.—Row's History of the Church of Scotland, MS. Advocate's Library.—Calderwood, 214.

her cruelty over a considerable space of time. Mary was put to death by the blow of an instant; but, so far as her son was concerned, she might be said to have died gradually during several weeks. The bitter pill was dissolved in a large draught, and swallowed imperceptibly. James, though apprised of her doom for some time before the event, still entertained a lingering hope that Elizabeth would not proceed to the last extremities—that nature would at length get the better of her high political resolve. His ambassadors returned to Holyroodhouse on the 7th of February, the day before Mary's death: it was not till the 15th that even a rumour of the event reached him. On that day, an express came to his secretary from Ker of Cessford, warden of the Borders, informing him that Sir John Forster, the opposite English warden, had just communicated intelligence of the Queen's death. At first, the fact seemed to him so imperfectly vouched, that, on the 17th, he did not scruple to go to the hunting at Calder. There intelligence reached him, that Mr Cary, youngest son of Lord Hunsdon, and a kinsman of Elizabeth, was coming to Scotland; which circumstance, connected with the information brought by his ambassadors that the English Queen was to send him such a person to convince him of the propriety of sacrificing his mother, induced him to believe that there was more probability in Cessford's message than he at first allowed to it. He therefore, on the 20th, sent Mr George Young, his secretary-depute, to Berwick, to inquire of the ambassador if the news were true—to allow him to enter Scotland, if false; but, if true, to bid him enter at his peril. Young

returned on the 23d with a confirmation of the report, which gave James the most acute pain. 'It put his Majesty,' says a simple chronicler of passing events,* 'into a very great grief and displeasure, so that he went to bed that night without supper, and on the morrow by seven o'clock went to Dalkeith, there to remain solitary.' We are informed by Camden, in his Annales of Elizabeth, that he spent many subsequent nights in tears. Another minute annalist says, that his Majesty 'investit himself with a *duil weed of purple* for certayne dayis;'† that is, a suit of mourning made of purple. The whole court followed this example, except the Earl of Argyle, who appeared in a suit of armour, hinting that he conceived *that* the proper fashion of mourning in which the nation should bewail the murder of their late sovereign.

It is a touching circumstance, that affection for her son was among the last sentiments expressed by Mary when about to part from the world. According to the narrative of her execution drawn up by the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, who attended her, she paused at a landing-place in the stair, as she was descending to the fatal hall of Fotheringay, and said to the master of her household, "Melvil, as thou hast been an honest servant to me, so I pray thee continue to my son, and commend me to him. I have not impugned his religion, nor the religion of others, but wish him well. And, as I forgive all that have offended me in Scotland, so I would that he should also; and beseech God that

* David Moyses, an officer of the King's household.
† History of King James the Sext.

he would send him his holy spirit, and illuminate him." Moreover, in her last brief prayer before the block, she entreated God "to be merciful to her son."

A good deal of indignation was expressed in Scotland when the intelligence of her death became generally known. It was a custom of that time to express public sentiments, which could not otherwise be published, by the clandestine plan of affixing pasquils, by night, to the doors of the courtiers. Numbers of these were displayed on the streets of Edinburgh, urging the King and council to revenge Mary's death. But this feeling was far from being general. It was indeed almost exclusively confined to the relics of the Queen's faction, and to the favourers of the French interest. The greater part of the people, prejudiced against Mary, on account of her religion and the dubious circumstances of her history, accustomed also by their clergy to regard every thing done by Elizabeth with respect, heard of her murder without resentment.

Whatever really were the feelings of the King, it was totally out of his power to take any measures for their proper expression. Had he attempted to levy an army for the invasion of England, as his less considerate advisers would have done, it is not probable that he would have raised half the number of men which Lord Scroop had now ready to oppose him, in case of such a proceeding, on the south-western border. He had not even a minister who was inclined to revenge: Maitland, his chief adviser, was decidedly adverse to a breach with Elizabeth. It is also a strong fact in his favour, that many of his nobility secretly sent letters to

Elizabeth, urging her to the execution. * He has himself drawn up a paper of reasons why 'he was unable to revenge the heinous murder, committed against his dearest mother, by the old enemies of my progenitors, realm and nation: First, in respect of my tender youth, [he was twenty and a half,] not trained up in dexterity of arms, either to withstand injury, or to conquer my own right, being at all times bygone *detained in captivity*: Next, my excessive want, being obliged to live from hand to hand; having sufficient patrimony and casualty, without any thing in store: Then, the divers factions of spiritual and temporal estates; every one regarding himself, and not me.'

It now turned out that the English emissary who was detained at Berwick, had not been sent to convince the King, as his ambassadors announced, of the *propriety* of having his mother put out of the way, but for the very different purpose of excusing Elizabeth from all blame in so *unhappy* and so *odious* a transaction. When this gentleman found himself denied a passport into Scotland, he sent a letter to the King, expressive of the Queen's sorrow for what had taken place, and explaining away the whole matter as an *accident*! Elizabeth, he said, had been prevailed upon, by the prayers of her council and people, to sign the Scottish Queen's sentence; but it was only that they might not be unprovided with a weapon against the Catholics, foreign and domestic, in case of their rescuing her from Fotheringay Castle, as they threatened, and endeavouring to set her up as monarch of England. The secretary, Davison, to whom she intrust-

* Camden's Annales of Elizabeth.

ed the custody of the paper, carried it, by a flagrant misinterpretation of her wishes, to the council, who immediately despatched a commission to see it put into execution; 'which was done, she protested to God, before she knew it.' The secretary was committed to prison for his misdeeds, for which he should not escape her high displeasure. 'This,' concludes Cary, 'is the effect of my message; which, if I could express so lively as I did hear her utter it with a heavy heart and sorrowful countenance, I think your Majesty would rather pity the grief she endureth, than in any sort blame her for the fact wherenunto she never gave consent.'

Cary also bore the following letter from Elizabeth herself—one of the most ingenious pieces of false feeling which even that exquisite dissembler ever penned:

'My Dear Brother; I would you knew, though not felt, the extreme dolor that overwhelmeth my mind for that miserable accident which, far contrary to my meaning, hath befallen. I have sent this kinsman of mine, whom ere now it hath pleased you to favour, to instruct you truly of that which is too irksome to my pen to tell you. I beseech you, that as God and many me know how innocent I am in this case, so you will believe me, that, if I had done it, I would have abode by it. I am not so base-minded that the fear of any living creature should make me afraid to do what is just, or, done, to deny the same; I am not so degenerate, nor carry so vile a mind. But, as not to disguise fits most a king, so will I never dissemble my actions, but cause them show as I mean

them. This assure yourself for me, that, as I know it was well deserved if I had meant it, I would never lay it on another's shoulders; and to impute to myself that which I did never so much as think of, I will not. The circumstances you will be pleased to hear of this bearer: And for my part, think you have not a more loving kinswoman and more dear friend, nor any that will watch more carefully to preserve you and your state. And if any would otherwise persuade you, think they bear more good will to others than to you. Thus, in haste, I leave to trouble you, beseeching God to send you a long reign.

'Your most assured loving sister and cousin,

ELIZABETH, R.'

Of course, few readers will require to be reminded, that the writer of this letter was herself the direct dictator of Mary's death, and that, if she had any hesitation whatever in the matter, it arose from an earnest wish that the unhappy Queen should be assassinated by some wretch, from an idea of good service, instead of being put to a ceremonious death by her warrant. 'Oh, tyger's heart within a woman's hide!' as the old dramatist has prophetically expressed her character.

After the delivery of these letters, there was a meeting of English and Scotch commissioners at Foulden Kirk in the Merse, to adjust the terms of satisfaction to be rendered by Elizabeth to James for his mother's slaughter. And a scheme was agitated for a reparation of a tangible shape, such as was sometimes paid, according to a custom which prevailed in Scotland, by persons guilty of

homicide, to the nearest of kin of the deceased. But, in the course of a few weeks, the King permitted himself to be pacified, without any formal recognition of the injury he complained of. The death of Mary was a matter too necessary to the interests of all and sundry, himself included, to be very long resented; and, all the circumstances considered, he might very well smother his desires of revenge, without incurring the charge of having been indifferent to the claims of blood.

CHAPTER V.

JAMES'S MARRIAGE—HIS ARRIVAL WITH THE QUEEN FROM DENMARK—THEIR RECEPTION.

1589—1590.

THE next transaction in which James was engaged, was one of a much more pleasing nature. He now judged it time, since he approached his majority, to supply himself with a consort. There were many reasons for this resolution. He was the only individual of his family; the heir-presumptive to his Scottish crown was a lunatic, (the Earl of Arran); failing himself, the inheritance of the English crown was apt to be disputed by a number of claimants; and he knew that, if he had offspring, he would be less exposed than heretofore to assassination. He was moreover sensible, that the possession of a family of children must recommend him very warmly to the English people, and smooth his way to the throne. Elizabeth had long endeavoured to repress all desires of this kind in James, partly from a fear lest he should make an improper choice, and partly from anticipation of the favour and influence he should thus acquire among her people, to her own prejudice. But she now relaxed so much, as to recommend him to marry the sister of the King of

Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. of France, an alliance calculated to strengthen the Huguenot or Protestant interest in that kingdom against the Guise family and the King of Spain.

But, previous to introducing a Queen into his kingdom, he esteemed it necessary that the feuds which agitated it should be somewhat stilled. For this purpose, at a Convention of Estates, which was held at Edinburgh in May 1587, he exerted himself to abolish some of the causes of wrath which existed among his nobility. The Master of Glammis, for instance, and the Earl of Crawford, had long been inflamed against each other; and the brother of the former had been shot by the servants of the latter, as he was passing along one of the streets of Stirling, only ten years before. The Earl of Angus entertained a vehement grudge against the Earl of Montrose, chiefly because Montrose had sat as chancellor on the jury which condemned Angus's uncle, the Earl of Morton; for in that age, as justice could only be obtained by force, so was its stroke looked upon by the sufferers as a matter no less to be avenged than an ordinary private injury—and all this notwithstanding that Angus was a zealous religionist, even so much so as to be styled by James, for his friendliness to the Church, *the Ministers' King*. All these persons being assembled at the Convention, and every exertion having been there made by the King and his chancellor Maitland to adjust their disputes, James invited them privately to a banquet in Holyroodhouse, on a Sunday afternoon, placed them promiscuously at a large table, drank to them three several times, commanded them to live henceforth in peace and concord, and vowed to be a mortal

enemy to him who first should commit violence against another. We know not what success he met with on this first evening; but next night, when the banquet was repeated, the reconciliation of the nobles was solemnized by a social ceremony, which placed it beyond a question. After supper, when they had probably been mollified to a certain degree by liquor, the whole sallied out of the palace into the streets of the neighbouring city, exactly in the guise in which they had sat at table—that is, without sword and doublet, and, ranging themselves into a column, walked hand in hand to the market-cross, the King at their head, supported by his kinsman Hamilton, and they themselves each side by side with the particular individual against whom he had lately borne the most deadly hostility. So strange a procession attracted an immense crowd; and it was not without feelings of the highest gratification that the peaceable citizens beheld a scene which seemed to betoken a conclusion to all civil war in the country. The magistrates, according to the report of one of their fellow-citizens, went in advance of the procession, dancing for very joy. The prisoners for debt were liberated from jail; the Cross was hung with tapestry, and planted with trumpeters and singers; the gibbets, which had stood there for years, to execute the numerous victims of civil discord, were hewed down and burnt; and a long table being placed upon the street, the King and the nobles sat down and partook of a civic banquet; while every window and outer stair in the neighbourhood displayed a similar scene of feasting and social joy. After all the individuals formerly at feud had publicly shaken hands with each other,

and drunk to each other's health, the whole returned in similar order to the palace, amidst music, the firing of cannon, and the blessings of a people which seemed absolutely transported with joy.

James, with the advice of his Parliament, now despatched ambassadors to the court of Frederick II., King of Denmark, to make proposals regarding a marriage with his eldest daughter. Elizabeth was averse from this match, and thought that the sister of the King of Navarre would be preferable, though, even with her, she wished James to delay any alliance for three years. Altogether, it is probable that he would not have achieved a marriage at all, adverse as Elizabeth was to such a measure, but for the Spanish Armada, which sailed next year against her kingdom, and which caused her to allow James this gratification, as part of the price of his steadfastness in her interest during a time of such danger.

James's behaviour throughout the year eighty-eight was spirited, and all that Elizabeth could wish. He undertook various little expeditions against such of his Catholic subjects as had gone into arms with a view of assisting the Spanish invaders; and, when informed by the English ambassador that he was included in the threats which Philip gave out, he answered with a jest, that "he looked for no better favour than that which the Cyclops Polyphemus promised to Ulysses, to be the last devoured."

Yet all his good service could hardly purchase the permission he desired to marry. Elizabeth, by means of the Chancellor Maitland, who was devoted to her, threw a thousand little obstacles in

the way. His envoys, by her exertions, were sent with such limited powers, that Frederick, judging himself insulted, gave his daughter to the Duke of Brunswick. Even when James had condescended to seek the second daughter, he came, for some time, no better speed. Maitland crippled every embassy which he sent out. It was, at last, only by the humble expedient of spiriting up the trades of Edinburgh to raise a popular riot in favour of the marriage, that he prevailed upon his minister to countenance it. The Earl Marischal was then despatched with proposals which were judged reasonable by the Danish King; * and in August 1589, the Princess Anne was married by proxy, and set sail for Scotland. She was at this time only fifteen years of age.

James, who had waited and laboured for his wife almost as long and as much as Jacob did for Leah, now expected that he was about to be gratified by her presence. To his great chagrin, a message, which arrived almost immediately after that which informed him of her departure for Scotland, gave him the unwelcome intelligence, that she had been driven back by contrary winds to the coast of Norway, where, in all probability, she should have to wait for fair weather till the next spring. This was too much for even James's sluggish nature. To be baulked by so adventitious a matter as the weather, after he had eluded the more serious difficulties presented by Elizabeth and Maitland, seemed exceedingly hard. He determined, by a violent personal exertion, to overcome

* Frederick II. was now dead, and the contract was negotiated with his son, Christian IV.

this unworthy obstacle. Without consulting any one, he conceived one day, while living at Craigmillar, the resolution of sailing to Upsle, the port where the Queen had taken refuge, and there solemnizing his nuptials. This, says Miss Aikin, was a sally so little to be anticipated from his timid and indolent temper, combined with his known indifference to female charms, that it appears to have perplexed not a little all to whom his character has furnished matter of speculation. But he had sufficient reasons for his conduct, both as to number and force; and fortunately he has stated them himself.

'First of all,' says James, in a declaration which he left behind him for the satisfaction of his subjects, and which forms a capital specimen at once of his style of composition in prose, and his simple familiar character; 'I doubt nocht it is manifestlie knawne to all how far I was generally found fault with be all men for the delaying so lang of my mariage. I wes allane, without fader or moder, brothir or sistar, King of this realme, and air appeirand of England; this my nakednes maid me to be wak, and my inemyis stark; as man wes as no man, and the want of heip of succession bred disdayne; yea, my lang delay bred in the breistis of mony a grite jealousie of my inhabilitie, as gif I wer a barrane stok: Thir reasonis, and innumerable otheris hourly objected, moved me to haisten the treaty of my mariage; for as to my awne nature, God is my witnes, I could have abstenit langsir nor the weill of my patrie could have permitted. I am knawne, God be praised, not to be very intemperatly rashe nor concety in my wechtiest effairis; nather use I to be sa caryed away

by passioun as I refuse to heir reasoun.' He then tells, that, having understood the Queen could not come to him, he resolved to go to her. 'The place that I resolvit this in wes Craigmillair, not ane of the haill counsale being present there; and as I take this resolutioun onlie of myselff, as I am a trew prince, sa advised I with myselff onlie quhat way to follow furth the same.' Then he tells that he assembled the council at Edinburgh, for the purpose of having ships prepared; but finding them difficulted as to the fitting out a sufficient number to be an honourable convoy for the King of Scotland, he 'wes compelled to avow with grite vehemencie, that, giff thay could be gottin na othir to gang, I suld ga myselff allane, *gif it were but in ane ship:* But giff all men (said I) had bene as weill willit as became thame, I neidit nocht be in that strait.' This reproach was designed for the Chancellor Maitland; and it stung him so, that he offered to accompany the King. James, however, consulted him no further till his departure; 'twa reasouns moving me thereto; first, because I knew that giff I had maid him on the counsaill thairof, he had been blameit of putting it in my heid, quhilk had not bene his dewitie, for it becumis na subjectis to giff princes advice in sic materis; and therfoir, remembering quhat invyous and injust burding he dalie beires, *for leiding me by the nose*, as it wer, to all his appetytis, as giff I war ane unreasonable creature, or a bairne that could no nothing of myselff, I thocht pitie then to be the occasioun of the heaping of farther injust sklander upoun his head. . . . . This far I speik for his parte, alsweill for my awin houneuris saik, that I be not sklanderit *as ane irresolute asse*, quha can do na-

thing of himself, as also that the honestie and innocencie of that man be not injustlie and untrewlie reproched.'

Having appointed his kinsman, the Duke of Lennox, (son to his former favourite), Regent in his absence, with Francis Earl of Bothwell for a co-adjutor, and having put the above most amusing declaration into the hands of his clerk-register, James, on the 19th of October, secretly embarked on board a small ship at Leith, with his chancellor, and immediately set sail for Norway, accompanied by other four vessels. This little fleet at first encountered rough weather, which detained it in the Frith of Forth for the better part of a week; but at length a fair wind sprung up, which carried him over to Slaikray in Norway, in the short space of four days. From Slaikray he immediately advanced, partly by land and partly by sea, to Upslo, where the Queen was still remaining. Arriving on the 19th of November, he was immediately introduced—'boots and all,' says David Moyses—to the Queen's lodging; his eagerness to see the young person with whom he was destined to spend his life, being too great to admit of the proper ceremonials. His conduct at the first interview was spirited enough, to be of a piece with the whole enterprise. He attempted to salute his consort, after the fashion of his country, with a kiss. She, ignorant of the good Scottish custom, refused to admit of his embrace. But, says Moyses, with delightful quaintness, 'after a few words privately spoken betwixt them, there followed a farther familiarity, and some kisses.' . . .

They were married on the 23d, Mr. David Lyndsay, the King's own minister, performing the

nuptial ceremony in the French language. James next morning presented his bride with the lordship and palace of Dunfermline, by way of a *morrowing-gift*, as it was called, a present usually made in that age by a bridegroom to his bride, on the morning after their nuptials: Dunfermline, therefore, became what in modern language would be called the Queen's jointure-house. Immediately after the marriage, ambassadors came from the court of Denmark, soliciting James to delay his return to Scotland till the beginning of the next year, and spend the intermediate time in Copenhagen. In consideration of the weather, and partly perhaps for reasons of state, he consented to this proposal; and, on the 22d of December, he and Queen Anne set out from Upslo on their journey to Denmark. They arrived, on the 21st of January, at Chronenburg Castle, on the celebrated Straits of Elsinore, where they were received with great distinction and rejoicing by the young King, his mother, and the four regents of the kingdom. It was proposed and agreed to, that they should remain till the solemnization of the marriage of Anne's eldest sister to the Duke of Brunswick.

It is perhaps at this place that a description should be given of the person of the young Scottish monarch. James was by no means a man of agreeable appearance. His figure was of middle stature, and sufficiently bulky above. But its dignity, and even its manliness, was destroyed by the extreme slenderness and feebleness of his limbs, which shook and struck against each other at every step. As he was obliged, by the fashion of his time, to wear clothes that were voluminous every

where but below the middle of the thigh, this fault of his person was particularly conspicuous. Though his brow had all the melancholy loftiness usually observed in the portraits of the Stuarts, and was a fine feature, his face was not good, either in front or in profile. His nose was hollow, and bottled a little at the extremity; his mouth was large, and his beard scanty. His countenance, altogether, was one of those which, from their essentially puerile cast, retain the appearance of youth for an extraordinary time, and only acquire the respectability which attaches to mature age, when wrinkles, and other traces of advanced years, have become too decided to be mistaken. It was one very disagreeable peculiarity of his person, that his tongue was too large for his mouth, causing him to beslabber the bystanders when he was either speaking or drinking. Scarcely any of the common engraved portraits are at all like him; but there are several excellent and most characteristic likenesses of him preserved in the picture-galleries of both countries.

With regard to his moral behaviour up to the present crisis, he seems to have been of singularly pure life. In his Basilicon Doron, he informs us that he avoided every wickedness during his early years, and draws a contrast betwixt his own conduct in this respect, and that of his grandsire James V., whose debaucheries had rendered his own government disreputable, and endangered that of his successors by the ambition of his illegitimate posterity. But, putting his own suspicious testimony out of the question, there is not so much as an imputation thrown upon his purity in youth, by any contemporary writer; nor has he

left a single amour on record. He was greatly addicted to the vice of swearing, which, however, is at the worst theoretical, and the result of fashion as much as any thing else. He was also inclined to indulge in drinking, a vice which advanced much upon him as he increased in years.

To this last pleasure, it appears, he might have given unlimited scope in Denmark, without incurring any blame. The Danes at this time were perhaps the most convivial people on the face of the earth. Spottiswood, in recording that no quarrels occurred among the King's attendants all the time they were in Denmark, says, with great simplicity, that this was the more wonderful, since 'it is hard for men in drink, *at which they were continually kept*, long to agree.' James himself dates a letter from 'Chroneburg, *quhaire we are drinking and dryving ower in the auld maner;*' a most amusing trait of self-portraiture. I need scarcely remind the reader, moreover, of the authenticated tradition regarding the whistle of the family of the Lauries of Maxwellton, which was won by an ancestor from a Bacchanalian champion among the Danes, who had challenged the Scottish topers, on this occasion, to a trial of strength, and was fairly drunk under the table, after an almost unexampled debauch. *

James continued in Denmark during the entire months of February and March 1589–90, in the enjoyment not only of the pleasures of the social board, but also of a series of pageants and shows, which were got up by the court for his entertainment. He, in the mean time, sent home intelli-

* See Burns's Poems.

gence to Scotland, that he had the greatest reason to thank the Almighty for having 'clothed him with a wife' of the most excellent 'gifts and commodities.' From time to time he received intelligence, in return, from Scotland, that the country had never been in a quieter state; only two disturbances having happened during the whole winter—one occasioned by the clan Gregor in Balquhidder, the other by 'that wicked and insolent man,' as Spottiswood terms him, Archibald Wauchope of Niddrie, who had killed a dependant of the Abbot of Holyrood—whereas, in general, there was seldom a week without some dreadful tale of murder or riot.

James, who, previous to his marriage, had seen no place besides the southern district of Scotland, appears to have been very much impressed by the sight of the continental states in which he was now sojourning, and to have drawn no favourable contrast between their magnificence—humble as it was, compared with that of the southern states of Europe—and the wretched poverty of his own country. He also seems to have been surprised not a little at the strength of the *executive* in Denmark, as compared with its weakness in Scotland. He naturally became anxious that, before his return, when, besides the queen, many dignified persons of her brother's court were to attend him, the objects which were to be presented to their eyes should be of as respectable a kind as the circumstances of the country would permit—that his palace should be put into good order, that the persons who were to receive him on the shore should be of good character, and that there should be none of those shameful breaches of the peace which had

all along disgraced his reign, and than which nothing was better calculated to give the strangers a mean idea of his government. Inspired by these notions, we find him writing a letter to his council in February, imploring them, with ludicrous earnestness, to prepare the country in a befitting manner for his arrival. The letter is a great curiosity, and, as it is sure at once to amuse the reader, and to increase his acquaintance with the King's character and style of writing, it is here inserted.

'My Lords of Counsal, that this general letter of mine may serve, asweill to you all, as to every one of yow in particular, lay the blame, I prayse yow, upon the hast and fascheousnes of the dispatche, and not upon my sweirnes, althoughe I cannot denye, that to write with my own hand I am both slawe and sweire anench: I doubt not that yee wille tak this in all good part, as if I wrote a trough of paper to every one of yow.

'Ye may now knaw, by the season of the yeir, that my coming home, God willing, drawes neire. I am surely treated here with all the honor and hartliness that this contrie people can imagine, I think we should not be unthankfull when theires comes in our bounds. *A king of Scotland with a new marid-wyfe, will not come hame every day.* For God's sake, respect not onely my honor in this, but the honor of our whole nation, and speciallie of yourselffis; for my part will be leist in it. It is knowne that I am absent, and all the warld knaws that when the gudeman is away he cannot be wyted of the misorders in the house; but what may he think then of his servants and factors he has left therein?

'Now, my Lords, since this is the only grete

proof of your diligence, without my presence or assistance, that ever I am able for to have of you, let me knawe now what remembrance ye have of me during my absence, by diligent remembring and performing such directions as the beirar hereof, the Master of Wark, hes in charge of me to deliver unto you. Remember specially upon the ending out of the Abbay, as yet lying in the deid-thraw, without the which we cannot be lodgit at our landing; and in good faith it is not the maner of this countrie to lye therout, for the greatnes of the frost; and for a token that ye have not forgotten us, ye may send two or three ships here to show us the way home; but let nae great men or gentilmen come in them, but many gude marinells; for I am already overchargeable to these folks here; besides that every one of you will have enench to do in the turnes I have employed you to do at hame. For Godsake, in any thing, respect my honor, that all discords and vaniteis and quarrells may be supercedit at this; for gif I took sic strait order for that the last yeir, when I lookit for my weifs coming hame and a certayne companye of strangers with her, how muckle mare sould it be this yeir when we are baith to cum hame and twice as gret a numbre of strangers, and speciallie sen I have seen so gude ane example in this countrie.

"Indede, I have gude cause to thank yow all for the great quietnes that ye have already keept, as I perceive by your last letters. Remember likewise that nae great man or counsellar presume to be at our landing, but suche as the beirar hereof will in a roll deliver unto you, ut omnia fiant decenter et cum ordine.

'Fail not to provide gude cheare for us; for we have heir abundance of gude meit and *part of drinck;* to the particulars of this I remit to my directions, as of all other things likewise.

'To conclude, I bothe pray you, and command you sleuth na tyme, and for my part sake do at this tyme *even mair nor is possible;* for ye knaw I will never eit nor drink a fair wind.

'From the Castle Croneburg, the 19 day of February 1589.

'JAMES, REX.' *

The same solicitude is apparent in a letter of the same date, which the King wrote to the Reverend Robert Bruce, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. He had left Bruce a member of the Privy Council, and with a kind of understood commission of supervision over the morals of the kingdom. He now writes to him in a familiar strain, beseeching him to exert himself to keep the people in order before his return. 'Waken up all men,' he says, 'to attend my coming; for I will come, as our maister sayeth, like a thief in the night, and whose lampe I find burning with oyle, these will I coin thanks to, but those that lack their burning lamps, provyded with oyle, will be barred at the door; for I will not accept their crying, Lord, Lord! at my coming, that have forgot me all the time of my absence. . . . *For God's sake, take all the pains you can, to teach our people weill against our coming, lest we be all ashamed before strangers.*' Could any thing be more characteristic of this singular monarch, so well aware as he always was of what ought to be

* Rymer, vii. ii.

done, and so willing that it should be done, yet so incapable of using the proper coercive measures for doing it? 'I think this time,' he adds, 'should be a holy jubilee in Scotland, and our ships should have the virtue of the ark in agreeing, *for a time at least*, naturales inimicitias inter foras; for, if it otherwise fall out (quod Deus avertat), I shall behove to come hame like a drunk man amongst them, which would be no strange thing, coming out of so drucken a countrie as this!' Then the necessities of the poor king are displayed. 'I pray you,' he says, 'heartilie recommend me to the good provost of the town, and in any thing he can pray him to assist my affairs, as I have ever been certain of his good will in my services. Specially desire him to further all he can the outreeking of three or four ships to meet me here, and convoy me hame.' [He had been enabled to sail for Denmark, solely by the generosity of a few private individuals, who each fitted out a little vessel.] 'And likewise, I doubt not he will assist the Maister of Wark in getting as many good craftsmen as may be had for ending out the half-perfyted Abbey, [his palace,] that now lies in the deid-thraw. * * * Thus recommending me and *my new rib* to your daylie prayers, I commit you to the only all-sufficient.'

Perhaps the reader will be inclined not only to smile at these indications of the poverty and imbecility of the Scottish monarch, but also to blame him in serious earnest for what is so inconsistent with the dignity of a sovereign. He should, however, pause to consider the dilapidated state in which James found his government and revenues, when he came of age; he should consider the

power of the nobles, many of whom could raise at any time far more men than their king; and he should reflect on the barbarous condition of the people, just emerged from the horrors of a protracted civil war, and from the vices incident to an age of religious reformation. As for the pecuniary distresses of the sovereign, which here appear so extreme, he actually seems to have had no resource whatever, on any occasion of unusual expense like the present, except the benevolence of a few of the burghs, chiefly those of Fife, which was then the most commercial and the richest province of Scotland. The proper revenues of the crown had, long before this time, been alienated and embarrassed almost to extinction.

James's poverty, however, was perhaps never less distressing to him than on the present occasion. The pride of country, for which the Scotch have always been remarkable, induced them to do all in their power to fulfil his wishes in regard to the appearance of the kingdom before the expected strangers, and also in respect of the vessels which he desired to have sent out for his convoy home. By an extraordinary exertion, though at the expense of a great multitude of individuals, the palace was finished and furnished in very splendid style, another house in the city was prepared for the Queen's Danish friends, a few small Fife coasters were sent out to Denmark, and a great variety of articles were prepared for the pageantries which were to be enacted on his arrival. Besides these more important arrangements, there were some of a humbler nature, which equally marked the desire of the people to put the country into a holiday attitude. The town-council of Edinburgh,

resolving that the strangers should see as little as possible of the filth and the mendicity for which the country was remarkable, ordained that 'all persons purge and clenze the streits, calsayis, and gutteris fornent their awin housis to the mid channel, as weill in the hie gait [*principal street*] as in the vennelis [*lanes*],' and that 'all beggaris remove, swa they be nocht fund beggand within this brugh, or betuix this and Leith, or ony uther part within the liberty or jurisdiction of this burgh.' They also ordained the bailies 'to pas throw their quarteris, and borrow fra the honest nychtbouris thairof ane quantitie of the best sort of thair neiprie [*table linen*], to serve the strayngeris that sall arryve with the Queen, and the said bailies to gif the nychtbouris thair awin ticket of ressait thairof.'

On the first of May, after these and sundry other preparations had been made, the King and Queen arrived at Leith, accompanied by the Admiral of Denmark, and other persons of dignity, and having a convoy of thirteen large Danish ships of war. The citizens of Edinburgh and Leith immediately flocked to the shore, each in his best clothes and arms. About seven at night, the King led the Queen ashore, 'by a trance covered with tapestrie and cloth of gold, that her foot might not touch the earth. The Duke of Lennox, the Earls of Mar and Bothwell, with sundrie others, received them at the stayr-heads. The castle and ships shot great vollies.'* Mr James Elphinston, a senator of the College of Justice, (afterwards Lord Balmerino), welcomed the royal pair in a Latin

* Calderwood, MS.

oration. 'The Queen being placed in her lodgings, the King took the chief of the Danes by the hand, every one after another. [Between thirty and forty of these persons were dignified men, with 'goldin chenyeis of guid faschioun;' * and the whole number was two hundred and twenty-four.] The King now received a visit from the minister Bruce, whose services in keeping the country quiet during his absence he acknowledged in very warm terms, afterwards accompanying him to the church of Leith, to return thanks to the Almighty for his prosperous voyage.

As the preparations at Holyroodhouse were scarcely yet completed, James remained for a few days in a palace, called 'the Kingis Wark' at Leith, his train chiefly lodging in the ships. At length, on the 6th of May, the royal party made their progress towards Edinburgh. 'The King and nobility rode before; the Queen came behind, in her Danish chariot, with her maids of honour, on each side of her Majesty one. The coach was drawn by eight horses, caparisoned in purple velvet, embroidered with gold and silver, very rich. The town of Edinburgh, Canongate, and Leith, in their arms, gave a volley of shot to the King and Queen in their passage, in joye of their safe arryval.' †—'In this manner, they passed to the Abbey of Holyroodhouse,' where 'the King, taking the Queen by the hand, led her through the inner close to the great hall, and thereafter to the cham-

* Moyses.

† Calderwood, MS., and Mr Gibson-Craig's 'Papers relative to the Marriage of King James VI.' 1828.

bers, which were richly hung with cloth of gold and silver.' *

The Queen was crowned in the Abbey church, on Tuesday, the 17th of May, Mr Robert Bruce performing the chief offices, which formerly used to be done by a bishop. The Presbyterian ministers on this occasion scrupled greatly about the propriety of anointing the Queen, judging that ceremony to be of a somewhat Popish savour; but James knew how to bring them to reason: He hinted that he could wait a little, till a certain bishop, whom he mentioned, could make it convenient to come to Edinburgh, to perform the ceremony. Alarmed at what he said, they lost no time in agreeing that there was no harm in the oil; and the ceremony was accordingly performed in the usual way. When it was concluded, Andrew Melville uttered a long congratulatory poem, in Latin hexameters, to the great delight of the King and his friends, who joined in soliciting that it should be printed. This poem was so elegant in its construction, and so apt to the occasion, as to attract the praise of the best foreign scholars, and to extend the fame of this great event in the life of James farther than it perhaps could have otherwise travelled.

About this time, James procured a marriage to take place betwixt his faithful school-fellow and counsellor, the Earl of Mar, and Lady Mary Stuart, daughter of the late, and sister to the present Duke of Lennox. It is a tradition in the family of Mar, that the Earl, before this period, when in widowhood, had consulted an Italian con-

* Calderwood, MS.

juror, as to the external appearance of the lady whom it should be his fate to marry for the second time, and that, the conjuror showing him a figure in a glass somewhat like Lady Mary, he at once fell distractedly in love with her. Unfortunately for his passion, the young lady had a great aversion to becoming the second wife of a man who had already an earlier family to inherit his title and estates; and, moreover, the King was supposed to have destined her for another. Mar, therefore, fell grievously ill, and seemed about to enact that strange absurdity, a man, with a large family, dying for love. But the King, being informed of his illness by a letter, visited him in his affliction, and cheered him up by exclaiming, in his usual boisterous way, 'By G—, ye shanna dee, Jock, for ony lass in a' the land!' His Majesty afterwards exerted those powers of small domestic intrigue for which he was remarkable, in bringing about a match between his Lordship and Lady Mary—a match which proved exceedingly happy.'

The Queen, two days after her coronation, made a progress through the city of Edinburgh, unattended by James. The ceremonials used on the occasion were of a nature so costly, as to give us a more respectful notion of the resources of Scotland at the period, than we are in general disposed to entertain. At the same time, there was an antique pedantry in the shews and masques got up to welcome the Queen, which proves the public taste to have been very barbarous. A child like Cupid descended from a gilt globe above the gate of entry, to present the keys of the city to her

Majesty.* Sixty young citizens, dressed like Moors, danced through the town before her. The nine Muses stood round 'the Butter Tron'—*proh scelus!*—'bravely arrayed in cloth of silver and gold,' and sung psalms to the Queen as she passed, while a young man, probably designed for Apollo, accompanied them on the organ! The whole was an exquisitely absurd compound of ancient and modern divinity, being partly dictated by the literary taste for the classics, and the popular taste for religion. At the High Church, her Majesty heard a sermon;—at the Tolbooth, she was introduced to the four virtues, Justice, Temperance, Prudence, and Fortitude;—at the Cross, she was regaled—first with a psalm, and then with a sight of 'Bacchus, upon a puncheon of wine, drinking, and casting the liquor in cup-fulls upon the people.' The principal street of Edinburgh, famed for its width and loftiness, was on this day *lined with tapestry from top to bottom*, many of these pieces of tapestry representing stories in ancient history, so that the whole must have had a singularly magnificent effect. At the extremity of the city liberties, a box of precious stones, valued at twenty thousand crowns, was presented to her Majesty as the gift of the town, and she was again regaled with *psalms*, accompanied by organ music.

A few days before this grand ceremonial, the Queen's Danish friends had made a progress by Falkland, Dunfermline, and Linlithgow, to take sasine in her Majesty's name of the dotarial possessions which the King had granted to her by his

* The keys laid on a plate, and covered with a veil, as was the old fashion.

treaty of marriage. These dignitaries soon after left the country, accompanied by their retinues, all except about sixteen persons, male and female, who remained about the Queen's person. The Scotch chroniclers are inhospitably particular in recording that, during the time they staid in the country, they put it to an expense of twelve hundred merks daily; which was too immense an expenditure, over and above the usual costs of the court, to be long tolerable.

Nothing else is remarkable about James's marriage, except that Elizabeth sent an ambassador to congratulate him on the event, and to carry presents to his wife. The ambassador was the same person * who had sat as chancellor on the jury which condemned his mother to the block; a proof striking, above all others, of what I have oftener than once had to point out in the course of this narrative, the want of delicacy—the total insensibility to all that is now called *good taste*, which characterized the age.

* The Earl of Worcester. He brought a cloak finely trimmed round, and set with rich jewels; a carcanet with pearls, a tablet, and a clock.

CHAPTER VI.

TURBULENCE OF THE EARL OF BOTHWELL AND THE CLERGY—POETICAL EXERCISES—DEATH OF THE EARL OF MORAY.

1589—1591.

The first year of James's married life was spent in some degree of quiet. Neither the nobility nor the ministers troubled him much during that period. It was not to be expected, however, that he could remain long unannoyed by one or other of these turbulent bodies. In the spring of 1591, an individual of the former class began a series of disturbances, which embittered the King's life for several years. This was Francis Earl of Bothwell, his illegitimate cousin, and the nephew of the former and more infamous Earl of the same title. Bothwell had been concerned in the intrigues which the Earl of Huntly, and some others of the Scotch nobility, carried on with the Spanish government, for furthering the object of the Invincible Armada; and in May 1589, he had been regularly condemned as guilty of treason on that account; though the King, from anxiety to keep on good terms with the Catholics, hung up the process against him and his accomplices. Bothwell was a man of exceeding violent passions. In the summer of

1589, he had received some contumelious language from Sir William Stuart, who was then in high favour, from his activity in suppressing the Catholics of the south of Scotland. As this language was given in the King's presence, he did not resent it on the instant; but he openly vowed to be revenged. Some days after, happening to meet Sir William on the principal street of Edinburgh, he drew his sword, and called to him to stand to his defence. A conflict took place, in which the servants joined. Stuart soon lost his sword, in consequence of a thrust by which he killed one of Bothwell's retinue. He then fled to a cellar in the neighbourhood, whither Bothwell pursued him, and there killed his defenceless antagonist by repeated wounds. Strange to say, the King, from his peculiar situation, was unable to take any legal cognizance of this atrocious homicide. He was even obliged to make this very nobleman, within a few months, one of his regents to govern the country during his absence in Denmark.

It is not now easy to discern, through the involved politics of James's court, how he at length came to look upon Bothwell as an enemy to his person. It is generally thought that Chancellor Maitland was the cause of his ruin, from dread of his turbulent and ambitious character. But, probably, the Earl had also offended James by some assumptions on the score of his descent; for although the King was, by his genealogy, the undoubted heir of both Scotland and England, yet he was induced, by the disposition which the Catholics and dissenters manifested to set aside his succession, to dread every sort of pretender, however absurd his claims.

Perhaps, after all, the more probable way of accounting for the disgrace of Bothwell, is to give credit to the charges brought against him by Maitland, and for which he ostensibly suffered, that he consulted with necromancers and witches, for the purpose of destroying the King, and procuring his own exaltation. It was his own constant declaration that he was innocent of any such offence; and the scepticism of later historians, in inducing them to scoff at witchcraft, has led them also to write as if there could have been no such thing as consulting with persons professing the art. But, as it is now known that both Bothwell and his son were, at a later period, noted for using such arts,* and as instances are on record of persons of equally good condition consulting sorcerers more than a century later, there seems to be no reason on that account for supposing his crime fictitious.—But this is a subject which will require to be treated at some length.

One of the most prominent charges brought against the intellect of King James, is his belief in witchcraft; and an allusion to his famous book on Dæmonology, is a favourite way of pointing an epigrammatic sentence against him. Many who never read his book take it upon them, from the changed opinions of the age regarding witchcraft, to sneer at him for giving his countenance to so base a superstition. But, how easy it is for a small mind, amidst the means and appliances of a late age, to assume a superiority over the picture of a great one struggling with the sloughs and shadows of a former and darker time!

* See Mr Sharpe's Introduction to Law's Memorialls.

The true way of considering the case is this. There are some matters of opinion, in which no mind is in advance of its age. Witchcraft was one of these till within the last hundred years. It is quite observable, that all the best informed intellects, both in Scotland and in England, sanctioned that superstition, down to the time of the Revolution. The cause is the same with that which renders a great mind equally capable of religious fervour, with the meanest and most confined. Wherever it is looked upon as a duty to exempt any thing from the ordinary modes of reasoning, then no wonder that all kinds of intellect alike receive it without hesitation. Such was the case with witchcraft about two hundred years ago: it was an essential thing in the religious creed of all orders of the people; to deny it was blasphemy, or at least disrespect for the dicta of Scripture. Surely it is a very strange thing, that a man who fulfilled in his life and opinions the whole idea of a good Christian, according to the views entertained of that character in his own time, should, at the distance of two hundred years, have so much discounted from his merit on one hand for superstition, so much on another for ignorance, and thus be left with a miserable fragmentary reversion of what was originally a very good repute!

But, while James merits this general exculpation from the charge of undue superstition, the 'Daemonologie' which he compiled on the subject, is in itself a very strong particular one. This work is by no means, what is generally supposed, a treatise written as a piece of special pleading, to prove the existence of witchcraft, and to impress

that belief more firmly on the public mind. It is a sort of *jeu d'esprit*—the play of a scholarly mind on a subject much beneath it; and, instead of being an argument all on one side, it is a dialogue between a person who is unwilling to believe in witchcraft, and one who does believe in it, and rather a statement of all the reasonings *pro* and *contra*, than any thing else. There is much piety in the book, much quotation of scripture, much acute and sensible observation; but, though the writer evidently believes in the pseudo art which forms the subject of the treatise, and gives the last word on all occasions to the dialogist who believes in it, I cannot allow that the result of the whole is to give a mean view of the intellect of the writer, or to entitle him to the sneers which are so frequently aimed at him by modern writers, and by others, who are totally unacquainted in general with the real nature of what they are professing to despise.

It was early in the year 1591 that the discovery was made which led to Bothwell's accusation. The ecclaircissement was so simple in its process, as to put out of the question all surmises as to a conspiracy on the part of the King or of Maitland against him. A man of the name of Seaton, depute-bailie of Tranent, near Edinburgh, was surprised to observe that his servant girl, Giles Duncan, frequently absented herself from his house during the night, and that all of a sudden she began to profess a power of curing diseases miraculously, and doing other things which seemed above nature. He thought proper to torture her for the purpose of learning her secret, when she disclosed to him that she had a compact

with the devil, and performed miracles by witchcraft. Her confession being confirmed by a discovery of what was called a *witch's mark* on the front of her neck, she was put into prison at Edinburgh, where she soon after accused a multitude of other persons, male and female, of the same crime, all of whom were immediately apprehended. Among these were—Agnes Simpson, midwife at the village of Keith in Lothian, whom Spottiswood describes as 'a woman not of the base and ignorant sort of witches, but matron-like, grave, and settled in her answers, which were all to some purpose'—Barbara Napier, wife of Archibald Douglas of Cashogle—and Euphame Macalyean, a gentlewoman of birth and fortune, the daughter of a deceased Judge, and wife of an advocate at the Scotch bar. These women are described by Johnston, in his history, as 'dignitate formæ haud degeneres;' and indeed, it is the most surprising thing about the whole of this strange exposé, that it inculpated people of education and good rank. It is thus evident, that tampering with forbidden arts was very common among all orders of society in this age; the greater crimes, as usual, flourishing at the same time that religion was loudest in its invectives against them, and the laws most severe in their punishment.

The rank of the prisoners, the high crimes they were charged with, and a curiosity which he seems to have entertained regarding occult arts in general, induced the King to have these women examined in his own presence at the palace. At first Simpson would confess nothing; but, being taken back to prison and tortured, she, at the second interview, made a full declaration of all her

crimes. She confessed that, during the time his Majesty was in Denmark, she had, with some accomplices, endeavoured to destroy his life at the command of the Earl of Bothwell, by exposing a wax image of him at a slow fire, and using some incantations for the purpose of causing his person to melt away by corresponding degrees; that she had used arts to prevent the vessel in which the Queen was embarked, from reaching Scotland, and afterwards to wreck the ship in which both their Majesties sailed from Denmark; and that, when these attempts had failed from some informality in the process, she endeavoured to procure from infernal sources, information for Bothwell as to the age his Majesty was naturally destined to reach, and whether he should have any chance of succeeding him. Besides these matters of serious import, she confessed many others which were only ludicrous:—on the eve of last Hallowmass,* she had gone, by the invitation of the devil, to the church of North Berwick, in East Lothian, where, on her arrival, she joined a company of about two hundred other sorcerers and sorceresses, all of whom immediately proceeded to dance through the churchyard, to a tune which was played to them on a Jew's harp by Giles Duncan, and each alternately chanting to another,

> Cummer, go ye before; cummer, go ye:
> If ye will not go before, cummer, let me.

{Here the King caused Duncan to be brought before him, in order to play that tune over again;

* Halloween, a night consecrated, as all persons acquainted with Burns's poems must recollect, to the revels of witches and hobgoblins.

which she did, to the great amazement of his Majesty and the courtiers present.] When the dance was concluded, a young sorcerer of the name of Cunningham, schoolmaster of Prestonpans, who took a lead in the whole proceedings, opened the church, and lighted a number of candles; when, the whole assemblage having entered and seated themselves, the devil suddenly started up in the pulpit, in the appearance of 'ane meikle black man,' 'clad in a black gown, with a black hat upon his head,' his nose like an eagle's beak, and his hands exhibiting claws instead of nails at the extremities. Being surrounded by lights, like a minister of the present day at an evening discourse—each light 'held lyk by ane deid man's hand' (a trait of horror which perhaps suggested part of Burns's description of the interior of Alloway Kirk), the Enemy of Man preached a burlesque sermon on the text, 'Many go to the market, but all buy not;' after which he cried over the names of his congregation, to which one by one answered. At his command, they then opened three graves, two within, and one without the church, and, taking forth the corpses, cut off certain joints, which he directed them to grind into a powder, for the purpose of being used in their incantations. He then asked if they had been good servants to him since their last meeting, and what particular service every one had done. He ordered them to keep his commandments, which were, in one word, just 'to do all the evil they could.' Finally, as they had that night displayed a little negligence regarding the hour of attendance, and kept him waiting for some time before they arrived, he subjected them to a penance similar to

the salutation which good Catholics perform to the Pope's toe, the women going before, and then the men. According to the report of Calderwood, the historian of the Scottish church, one of the men, whose nickname was Graymeill, endeavoured to avoid this degradation by staying behind the door; but Satan marked him in his retreat, and 'it behoved him also to kiss at last.' The assembly then broke up.

Among *fifty* distinct instances of necromancy, which are displayed against Simpson in her indictment, perhaps the reader may tolerate one for a specimen. Being sent for to Edmonstone, to decide by her supernatural skill whether the lady of the house should recover from an illness or not —for women of her order appear in that age to have been as regularly called to the bedsides of the sick as physicians—she told the attendants that she could give them the required information that evening after supper, appointing them to meet her in the garden. She then passed to the garden, and, as was her custom in such cases, uttered a metrical prayer, which, according to her own confession, she had learned from her father, and which enabled her to determine whether the patient would be cured or not, as, if she said it with one breath, the result was to be life, but, if otherwise, death. This prayer was as follows:—

'I trow [*trust*] in Almighty God, that wrought
Baith heaven and earth, and all of nought;
In his dear son, Christ Jesu,
In that comely lord I trow,
Was gotten by the Haly Ghaist
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Stapped to heaven, that all weil than,
And sits at his father's richt hand.

He bade us come and their to dome
Baith quik and deid to him convene.
I trow also in the Haly Ghaist;
In haly kirk my hope is maist,
That haly ship where hallowers wins
To ask forgiveness of their sins,
And syne to rise in flesh and bane,
The lip that never mair has gane.
Thou says, Lord, loved may he be
That formed and made mankind of me.
Thou coft [*bought*] me on the haly cross,
Thou lent me body, saul, and voce,
And ordanit me to heavenly bliss;
Wherefore I thank ye, lord, of this.
That all your hallowers loved be,
To pray to them that pray to me.
And keep me fra that fellon fae,
And from the sin that saul would slay;
Thou, lord, for thy bitter passion in,
To keep me from sin and warldly shame,
And endless damnation. Grant me the joy never will be gane, *
Sweet Christ Jesus. Amen.'

Having stopped in the course of this long prayer, she despaired of the lady's life. However, she called upon the devil, by the name of Elpha, to

* Her prayer, or conjuration for the healing of sickness, was as follows:—

'All kynds of ill that ever may be,
In Christ's name I conjure ye.
I conjure ye, baith mair and less,
By all the vertues of the messe,
And rycht sa with the naillis sa,
That nailed Jesus and not ma,
And rycht sa by the samen blude,
That reekit ower the ruthful rude,
Furth of the flesh and of the bane,
And in the eard and in the stane,
I conjure ye in God's name.'

Records of Justiciary.

come to speak to her. He presently appeared climbing over the garden-wall, in the shape of a large dog; and he came so near her, that, getting afraid, she charged him, by the law that he lived on, to keep at a certain distance. She then asked if the lady would live; to which he only answered, that "her days were gane." He, in his turn, asked where the young gentlewomen, daughters to Lady Edmonstone, were at present. She answered, that she expected soon to see them in the garden. "Ane of them," said he, "will be in perill; I wish to have her." On her answering, that it should not be so with her consent, he "departit frae her," says the indictment, "yowling;" and from that time till after supper, he remained in the draw-well. After supper, the young ladies walked out into the garden, to learn the result of Mrs Simpson's inquiries; on which the devil came out of the well, and, seizing the skirts of one of them, (probably a married one, as she is called Lady Torsonce), drew her violently towards the pit from which he had emerged; and it is added that, if Simpson and the other ladies had not exerted themselves to hold her back, he would have succeeded in his wishes. Finding himself disappointed of his prey, he 'passit away thairefter, with ane yowle.' The object of his ravenous passions fainted, and was carried home; she lay in a phrenzy for three or four days, and continued sick and cripple for as many months. And it was remarked that, whenever the wise wife of Keith was with her, she was well; but, on her going away, all the dangerous symptoms returned. In the mean time, it is to be supposed, the old lady died.

That King James should sit in his court at Holywoodhouse, and listen with interest and belief to such confessions as these, seems at the present day, it must be allowed, as strange a thing as well could be. It is only, however, an illustration of the age he lived in, of its absurd opinions and practices, not of his mind in particular. He may of course be equally justified for the severe measures which he took with the wizards,* all of whom, it must be remembered, were more or less guilty of the real crimes of abusing the credulity of the people, and of at least making the attempt to do injury to their fellow-creatures. A great number of those miserable wretches were put to death during the course of the year; almost all of them testifying to the justice of their sentence, by confessing their guilt at the very stake; while the people expressed scarcely a murmur at their fate.

In consequence of the confessions of Mrs Simpson, the Earl of Bothwell voluntarily entered into confinement in Edinburgh Castle, desiring to be tried for his supposed offence, the whole of which he denied. It was his first belief that the wizards, on account of their infamous character, would not be admitted as evidence against him; and he therefore anticipated a triumphant acquittal, which should not only restore him to society and the

* In the Dæmonology, he says, 'to spare the life, and not to strike when God bids strike, and so severely punish in so odious a fault and treason against God, is not only unlawfull, but doubtlesse no lesse a sin in that magistrate, nor it was in Saules sparing of Agag; and so comparable to the sin of witchcraft itself, as Samuel alleged at that time.'

King's favour, but also, perhaps, give him a preponderance against the obnoxious power of the Chancellor. It being soon determined, however, that the evidence of such persons might be admitted, on the same principle as that by which women, children, and persons of bad fame, were taken, by the law of the land, to prove treason, Bothwell thought proper to break his prison, and seek safety in flight. James then caused doom of forfeiture to be pronounced against him, for his concern in the conspiracy of the Catholics two years before, it being thought improper to outlaw him for the new crimes laid to his charge. Proclamation was at the same time made, by sound of drum, forbidding the subjects to afford him any countenance, food, or shelter, and commanding all to assist the magistrates in endeavouring to apprehend him.

Bothwell entertained a conviction that he was beloved by James, and he therefore threw the whole blame of this severity upon the Chancellor. With the audacity inspired by this sentiment, and justified by the imbecility of the executive, he came to Leith three days after the proclamation, and, deliberately taking his supper in the house of a friend, set both the laws and their administrators at defiance. The common bell of Edinburgh was rung for the convocation of the citizens, that they might go and seize the traitor who thus insulted his country. But, instead of any attempt being made to annoy him, he was permitted to act upon the offensive against them. With a train of sixteen horse, he rode up to the lower gate of the city, within which, at the distance of a few yards, the house of Chancellor Maitland was situated,

There, loudly proclaiming that he was *at the Chancellor's horn*, and not at the King's—that is to say, that he considered himself a rebel against Maitland only—he threw a forty-shilling piece on the ground, and said he would give that to any body who should bring forth his enemy without the gates. Nobody presuming to accept the offer, he said he would leave the piece, as a token that he had defied him. He then retired without the least annoyance, Maitland contenting himself with the negative measure of placing a guard of citizens upon his house, to prevent a second attempt of the same kind.

That an outlaw with sixteen attendants should have openly bravadoed in this manner before a king, a capital, and a seat of law, may well seem surprising in the present age. Yet it is only one of many circumstances which could be instanced to illustrate the singularly feeble condition of the government at this period. One or two cases may be mentioned. The King, immediately before his marriage, was one day walking down the High Street of Edinburgh, attended by the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Home, when the former nobleman, happening to meet the Laird of Logie, one of the gentlemen of the chamber, who had offended him some time before, by refusing to retire from the royal closet when Lennox expressed a wish to have it *ushed* or voided, he drew his sword: Logie drew his to defend himself; and a conflict took place by the very side of the sovereign; who, with his usual timidity, flew for refuge to the nearest alley, and was not content till he had got himself ensconced in a skinner's shop. Nearly about the same time, when James was sit-

ting in the tolbooth of Edinburgh, to give hearing on a case of divorce, in which a friend of Bothwell was the defender, that nobleman forced away a man who was to give evidence for the plaintiff, out of the very house where the King was holding his court, and, carrying him off to his castle of Crichton, through officers of court, citizens, and all other opposition, there threatened him with the gallows for having gone to be a witness against his friend.* But the great number of murders, which the King, however willing, found himself unable to prosecute, though many of them took place on the streets of the city, is a sufficient proof of the powerlessness to which his poverty, and the religious and political dissentions of the country, had reduced him.

Bothwell was known to be again in Leith on the 18th of October; when the King having, with some degree of spirit, mustered a party of armed friends, led them in person to attempt his apprehension. The Earl thought proper, on this occasion, to fly; and the party was obliged to return, having only seized the fugitive's best home, 'called Valentine.' †

On the 27th of December occurred his noted attempt on James's person, called 'the Raid of the Abbey.' Bothwell had now procured some degree of countenance and assistance from the Duke of Lennox, who, being a close attendant upon James's person, was able to give the best instruction regarding the proper method of invading it. Thus befriended, he resolved to renew the game played at Ruthven and Stirling some years before,

* Calderwood, MSS. † Ibid.

hoping, by the possession of the royal person, to revolutionize the administration in his own favour. At seven o'clock on the day mentioned, when James had just concluded supper, he was admitted, with a large party, by some persons belonging to the palace, who were upon the conspiracy. At that late hour, when no suspicion was entertained of his approach, he might have succeeded with great ease in seizing the King, who, idling in the Queen's chamber, had scarcely a guard to protect his person from the assailants. But a piece of imprudent haste spoilt the whole plot. One of Bothwell's accomplices was James Douglas of Spot, whose only object in the enterprise was to liberate some of his servants, who had been confined in the palace on suspicion of murder. This man was no sooner within the palace, than, eager to dispatch his own business, he caused his followers to break up the doors of the prison where his men were confined, with fore-hammers. The noise roused the King, and also the Chancellor, who happened to be there that night. Immediately all was bustle within the palace. The Chancellor shut himself up securely in his own chambers. The door of the Queen's apartments were barred. James, not trusting to the strength of that part of the palace, rushed down a back stair, and threw himself into a tower, which was much more capable of defence. When Bothwell came to the doors, and found them barred, he expressed the most violent rage. Calling for fire, he vowed to burn down all obstacles which lay between him and his prince. At that instant, however, Sir James Sandilands, one of the gentlemen of the King's chamber, entered the palace by a pri-

vate way through the church, accompanied by a number of the citizens, who had gathered at the first alarm. Had there been any lights, he would have seized Bothwell and all who were with him. But the darkness permitted the assailants to escape. As Bothwell went out, he shot the King's equerry, who encountered and attempted to stop him. Some of his attendants were seized, and, next day, hanged at the palace gate, without assize.

James was filled with sincere indignation at this attempt; but he was also inspired with a feeling of gratitude to the Almighty for having saved him. He accordingly went next day to the High Church, to return public thanks for his preservation. At the conclusion of the sermon, he stated to the people all the benefits he had conferred on Bothwell, and all the acts of ingratitude which that nobleman had committed in return. He at the same time complained of the 'harbourage' which some of them gave this notorious public enemy, but thanked the magistrates and people of Edinburgh for their prompt services against him on the preceding night.

On the following day, as he attended public worship in his usual way at the High Church, John Craig, noted in Scottish history as the man who drew up the national Covenant in 1584, offered him one of those insults from the pulpit, which were unquestionably not the least of the causes which he had for his subsequent attempts to introduce a different frame of worship into Scotland. The insult was the more poignant, that it was offered by one of the chaplains of his own household. It consisted of an invective against him for having 'lightly regarded the many bloody

shirts presented to him by his subjects craving justice.' * To reprove the King's indifference, continued Craig, 'God had made a noise of crying, and sent fore-hammers to his door!' James, much incensed at this ribaldry, requested the people to stay after sermon till he should say something in his justification. Yet the only remark he made, besides what he said in his defence, was, that, if he had thought his *fee'd servant* would have dealt with him after that manner, he would not have suffered him to be so long in his house. Perhaps, if these clergymen had had a somewhat greater share of the good nature which overflowed in their sovereign, much disturbance might have been spared to the country during the succeeding century. It is not even recorded that James displaced Craig from his situation in the household.

It would be difficult to conceive a situation more disagreeable to the faculties of a king, than that in which James was now placed. With an unquestionable right to the limited monarchy of Scotland, and the assurance of succeeding to a much more important kingdom, with considerable powers of intellect and much literary accomplishment, with the best intentions and a sincere wish to consult the good of every individual in the kingdom, yet such was the difficulty of his circum-

* This was an allusion to the custom of the friends of a murdered person carrying his bloody shirt on a pole to the King, as an incentive to the execution of the law upon the guilty. When the Colquhouns were overthrown in battle by the Macgregors on Lochlomond side, in 1600, *two hundred bloody shirts* were brought before the King's eyes in this manner!

stances, that he was little better than a cipher in the state, and obliged every day in the world to do things the most repugnant to his nature. On the part of the nobility, he found little sympathy, as each of them was engaged in studying his own selfish ends; from the clergy he met with still less, for every thing he did excited in them only a suspicion of some design against their own order; while his distress only afforded them hopes of enforcing their exorbitant claims with the greater success.

It seems to have been on this principle that they selected the present juncture for the purpose of inflicting what they called an *admonition* upon him. On the 8th of December, a deputation had visited him, to administer a rebuke for his neglect of the exercises of religion in his family, and to urge him to have scripture read to him at dinner and supper, instead of the books of ordinary literature, which, as we learn from his Basilicon Doron, he delighted to have perused for him on those occasions. This was all they thought it *delicate* to say to him publicly! But on the 17th, one of the most forward and zealous of their number, Mr John Davidson, visited him privately, to fill up the grosser articles of the dittay. This reverend gentleman 'admonished him of neglect of justice, and placing unfit men in offices, and of granting remissions.' James, with a degree of patience and condescension, which at once does him honour, and supplies us with the real view of his unhappy circumstances, answered, 'that he found no concurrence in inferior magistrates—no, not even against Bothwell, who sought his life; farther, that there were diverse offices of justice,' including the sheriff-

ships, which were claimed by heritage. As for the pardons which he granted with his own good-will, 'he would answer for every one that he gave, by good law and reason.' As for those which he gave against his will, 'such was the multitude of his businesses, that some about him deceived him by importunity, or got stolen subscriptions; from which kind of dealing he thought no flesh in his place could well be free. In regard to unfit officers, he really knew not where to get others, for no man seemed to think of any interest but his own; and his own was so constantly in the way, that he by no chance could consult that of the public. Davidson appears to have found this apology but too satisfactory; for the historian of his church here breaks off with the blunt remark—'Time straitening Mr Davidson, he desired he might have access another time, which was granted.'

Perhaps, the best comment upon the above apology, will be the preface which James this year affixed to a second volume of juvenile poems, entitled 'Poetical Exercises;' a composition, as Mr Gillies remarks, 'so interesting and unassuming, that it cannot fail to impress the reader with a favourable opinion of its author.'

'Receave here, beloved reader, a short poetique discourse which I have selected and translated from amongst the rest of the works of Du Bartas, as a vive mirror of this last and most decreepit age. Here shalt thou see clearly, as in a glass, the miseries of this wavering world,' &c. &c. 'And in case thou find aswel in this work as in my Lepanto following, many incorrect errors, both of the dytement and orthography, I must pray thee to accept this reasonable excuse, which is this. Thou

considers, I doubt not, that, upon the one part, I composed these things in my verie young and tender years, wherein Nature, except she were a monster, can admit of no perfection. And now, on the other part, being of riper years, *my burden is so great and continuall, without any intermission, that, quhen any ingyne and age could, my affairs and fasherie will not permit me to remark the wrong orthography, committed by the copies of my unlegible and rugged hand, far less to amend my proper errours. Yea, scarcle but at stolen moments, have I the leisure to bleuh upon any paper, and yet nocht that with free and unvexed spirit.* Alwaies, rough and unpolished as they are, I offer them unto thee; which being well accepted, will move me to haste the presenting unto thee of my Apocalyps [a paraphrastic commentary on the book of the Revelations, which he had written in the year 1585], and also such number of my Psalms as I have perfyted, [a translation of the Psalms, which Pope considered the best in the English language], and encourage me in the ending out of the rest. And thus, beloved reader, recommending these favours to thy friendly acceptation, I bid thee heartilie farewell.'

Surely he must have had little experience of the joys and sorrows of literature, and must have very ill considered the difficulty with which such pursuits are reconciled with the necessities of every-day life, who can deliberately sneer at this touching appeal, written as it is with such simple and unaffected feeling, and so utter an absence of all assumption from rank or other external circumstances. Yet it was this same man, who, in the moments stolen from sovereignty and sadness, and,

when left alone with the Egeria of his own unrobed and uncrowned fancy, wrote such poetry as the following—which appeared, about the same time, at the conclusion of a French translation of his poem of Lepanto, executed by the celebrated Du Bartas.

The azure vaulte, the crystall circles bright,
  The gleaming fyrie torches powdered there;
The changing round, the shining beamie light,
  The sad and bearded fyres, the monsters faire;
  The prodigies appearing in the aire,
The rearding thunders and the blustering winds,
  The foules in hue and shape and nature rare.
The prettie notes that winged musicians finds;
In earth, the savrie flouris, the metalled minds,
  The wholsum herbes, the hantie pleasant trees,
The silver streams, the beasts of sundrie kinds,
  The bounded roares and fishes of the seas;
All these for teaching man the Lord did frame
To do his will whose glorie shines in thame.

'When I read this sonnet,' says Mr Gillies, in his preface to the late reprint of King James's Poems, 'I almost fear, that, at the beginning of these desultory remarks, I have too much undervalued the pretensions of James to poetic merit.'

One of the *disagrémens* of James's situation was the necessity under which he lay of heading little enterprises against Bothwell; all of which were unsuccessful, and therefore attended with the consequence of lowering him in the eyes of his people. On one of these occasions, indeed, being the most awkward warrior in the world, he tumbled into a pool of stagnant water, where he would have been

drowned in spite of all the assistance his courtiers could render him, if a rustic had not dragged him out.* But the distresses which had beset the King up to this period, were as nothing to those which were about to result to him from a very unfortunate transaction, which took place on the night of the 8th of February 1591–2. For some time past, there had been a feud between the Earl of Huntly, the chief Catholic peer, and the Earl of Moray, who, on the other hand, was one of the leading men among the Presbyterians. Moray, who was the son-in-law and heir of the celebrated Regent, and who was universally esteemed for his amiable disposition and singularly handsome person, had provoked the justifiable hostility of Huntly, by protecting a felon, whom he, as sheriff, endeavoured to bring to justice—a hostility, however, which never assumed a decided aspect, till one of Huntly's kinsmen was killed by a shot from Moray's house of Darnaway, while assisting him in prosecuting the ends of his office. Soon after Bothwell's attempt on Holyroodhouse, a report having arisen that that outlaw had gone north to seek assistance from Moray, the King, to prevent the latter from falling into such a snare, dispatched Lord Ochiltree to bring him to court, intending also to attempt a reconciliation between him and Huntly. Meanwhile, a second report arising that Moray had already been in league with Bothwell, and was even seen in disguise among his attendants at the Raid of the Abbey, James was induced, by the importunity of Huntly, to grant him a commission to apprehend the young nobleman, and

* Calderwood, MS.

bring him to trial. Thus provided, on the afternoon of the 8th of February, Huntly rode with a large party of horse, from the house of the Provost of Edinburgh, where the King then lodged for security; and, giving out that he was to attend a horse-race at Leith, directed his journey across the Queensferry to Dunnibrissle house in Fife, where he understood the Earl of Moray was then residing with his mother. Thus, it will be remarked, he made but one stage betwixt the presence-chamber of his sovereign, and the scene of that cruel tragedy which he was about to perform. Arriving at Dunnibrissle about midnight, he beset the house, and called to the young Earl to come forth and surrender himself. Possibly, if Moray had at once paid obedience to the royal commission which Huntly bore, the terms of that commission might not have been transgressed; for we can scarcely conceive that a nobleman of Huntly's known good character would have murdered an enemy in cold blood. But Moray had too good reason to dread the resentment of a man whom he had so deeply injured; and he resolved to defend himself to the last extremity. Huntly then applied fire to the gates, for the purpose of forcing an entrance. Moray, despairing of his situation, held counsel with his friend Dunbar, the Sheriff of Moray, as to the possibility of escape. Dunbar conceived the idea of rushing out through the assailants, so that, while they were busied in despatching, or at least in pursuing him, the Earl might have an opportunity of escaping comparatively unobserved. He accordingly threw himself amongst them, and was instantly killed. Moray followed, and had the good fortune, as his gener-

ous friend anticipated, to escape through the Gordons, and make his way down to a ragged part of the beach near the house. The velvet edge of his helmet, however, had caught fire as he rushed through the flames, and while he was there endeavouring to enscence himself among the rocks, its light attracted the attention and pursuit of the enemy, who immediately fell upon him, and dispatched him by repeated wounds. It is but justice to Huntly to say, that the chief perpetrator of this deed was a headstrong and vindictive cadet of the family—Gordon of Buckie—who, inflicting a gash on Moray's face the expiring youth, mindful even at that moment of his distinguished beauty, murmured forth, "You have spoilt a better face than your own." Huntly is said to have approached after his younger kinsman had despatched their victim; but Buckie, swearing an oath that the Earl should be "as deep in" as himself, compelled him to alight from his horse, and inflict a few wounds on the inanimate corpse. They then hurried from the scene, leaving the body stretched on the beach, the house burning, and even a relation of their own wounded on the ground. Yet they do not appear to have entertained any great apprehensions regarding the consequences of their misdeed. At that time, it was judged equally honourable, in Scotland, to inflict vengeance on an enemy, and to afford succour to a friend. The Earl of Huntly retired to an inn at the neighbouring village of Inverkeithing, where he rested for the night. Nay, he even had the coolness to send his friend Buckie immediately back to Edinburgh, to inform the King of what he had done.

Buckie soon found that his night's work was

apt to be taken ill, and decamped from Edinburgh in the morning, just in time to escape seizure. In all probability, he never reached the King; for it is known that James was that morning abroad very early at the hunting, to all appearance unconscious of the event, although, from the grounds where he pursued his amusement (those of Inverleith and Wardie), he could see the expiring flames of Dunnibrissle House across the waters of the Firth of Forth. On his return to town, he found the streets full of lamentation for the murder of Moray, and strong suspicions universally entertained that he himself was accessary to it. Huntly had left the royal lodgings immediately before the action; a messenger had come to apprise the King of its accomplishment; and he had gone to hunt on a place where he could solace himself with the speediest intelligence of the event, by beholding the conflagration of the house. All these circumstances, besides the suspicion of his leaning to the Catholic, against the Puritan party, and a still vaguer conjecture that he had been jealous of Moray's intimacy with the Queen, were strongly insisted upon against him.

The 9th of February was thus a day of excessive distress to James. Finding himself suspected, and knowing no better method of clearing himself, he sent for a few ministers, whom he entreated that they would address the public in his favour from their pulpits. These gentlemen, however, knew better how to benefit themselves by what had taken place. It had all along been their tactics to work power to themselves out of the hands of the King, by aggravating the distresses of his government; and seeing that the popular cla-

mour against him for Moray's death might be the means of humiliating him still further; they utterly refused to do what he desired—leaving him with a hint that his best course to clear himself would be to pursue the murderers—which they knew he could not do—or which, were it possible, would still be in their favour, as calculated to destroy a Catholic. James's only resource was to publish a proclamation, in which he declared, upon his royal word, that his concern in the slaughter was no greater than that of David, when Abner was killed by Joab.

But the greatest distress of the day remained yet to take place. Lady Downe, mother of the deceased Earl, arrived at Leith in a boat, carrying with her the bodies of her son and his friend the sheriff, which she wished to present to the gaze of the people, in order to stimulate the vengeance of the laws against their murderers. To prevent so indecent a spectacle, and one so apt to inflame the public mind, already too much excited, James was obliged to forbid the bodies to be brought to Edinburgh. Lady Downe, having then caused a picture to be drawn of her son's mangled body, brought it to the King, enclosed in a piece of fine lawn cloth, and, exhibiting it before his eyes, with vehement lamentations, earnestly demanded justice. James could only join her in mourning the death of her son. She then took out three bullets which had been found in Moray's body, and, presenting one to the King, and another to a courtier who stood by, said she would reserve the third to herself, to be bestowed upon him that should hinder justice. All that James could do for her gra-

tification, was to order for execution the young man who had been left wounded by the Gordons, and whom she had brought over. He died, strongly protesting that he had no hand in Moray's slaughter, although acknowledging that he deserved death for other offences.* Another person, a footman of the Earl of Huntly, was executed at the same time, perhaps equally innocent.

This was in reality the whole extent of the justice which it was in James's power to execute. The Earl of Huntly had retired to his *country* in the North, where he was a far more powerful man than the King. Even if he could have been apprehended, was it possible for James to procure his punishment? Or was punishment strictly due, when the provocation, the morality of the age, and his not having himself been the actual murderer, were considered?

To escape, in some measure, the infamy which accrued to him on this account, the King made a progress to the West against Bothwell, and fixed his court for some time at Glasgow. The clergy still cried out most furiously against Huntly, whom they endeavoured to get excommunicated. James, who justly complained that they would never gratify him by excommunicating *his* enemy, Bothwell, was much incensed when he heard of their proceedings against Huntly, whose crime, in his estimation, was not so great, as not having been directed against the person of the sovereign. He said, in his anger, that "it would never be weill

* As this person appears from Spottiswoode to have been a cousin of the Earl, it cannot well be said that the murder of the Earl of Moray was altogether unavenged.

till noblemen and gentlemen gat licence to battle ministers' heads." There was much sense in the saying; for it is plain, that these men took freedoms with all orders of their fellow-creatures, and occasioned much disturbance, purely because they felt secure from personal violence.

An arrangement was at length made for staying the public appetite for vengeance against Huntly. Having received a promise from the King, that his person should be quite safe, he entered into ward at Blackness Castle, for the avowed purpose of standing his trial. He took care, however, that he should have such a number of faithful Gordons to cheer his confinement, as put the prison almost into his own keeping. When the popular clamours had a little subsided, he came out upon a bail of twenty thousand pounds; and he eventually endured no trial. The Lady Downe was so indignant at his impunity, that she took ill and died, leaving her malediction to King James. Huntly survived the transaction five-and-forty years, and Gordon of Buckie for even a still longer period; but it is gratifying to know that the latter, who was the real murderer, afterwards expressed the greatest contrition for his crime. The chief result of the whole transaction was, that the Presbyterian ministers—enabled by a proper use of the public irritation to push James very hard—now procured a parliamentary sanction for the establishment of their plan of church-government, which had never before been formally recognised by the legislature. They were therefore erected into a court independent of all earthly law, and only to be governed by the will of the invisible God, as it might please

themselves to interpret it. A more melancholy proof could not be given of the extreme humility to which James, and all his maxims of government, were brought at the present unhappy crisis of his life.

CHAPTER VII.

TURBULENCE OF BOTHWELL AND THE CLERGY CONTINUED—PLOTS OF THE CATHOLIC LORDS—BOTHWELL RESTORED—AND FORFEITED—BATTLE OF BALRINNES—DEATH OF CHANCELLOR MAITLAND.

1591—1595.

THE earlier part of the year 1592 was chiefly employed by James in endeavours to seize the Earl of Bothwell; but on the 26th of June, that nobleman made a second attempt, in his turn, to seize the King. While James was quietly residing at Falkland, a palace of which he was extremely fond, on account of the extensive hunting-grounds which surrounded it, Bothwell, having raised a considerable force upon the Borders, suddenly advanced during the night, and had very nearly surprised the King. Fortunately, however, Sir James Melvill gained intelligence of his motions, and was able to dispatch a servant in time to warn James of his approach. At first, the courtiers prevailed upon the King to laugh at the intelligence, many of them being in reality engaged by Bothwell to open the doors, and assist him in seizing the royal person. The messenger then retired in anger; but, falling in with Bothwell's company as he went home, he thought it his duty to return, and make a second attempt to

warn his Majesty. Falling into the ranks, as one of their company, he got back to Falkland, and locked the outer gate of the palace, a few minutes before the conspirators were ready to make the attack. He then used his voice loudly and vehemently, to prevail on the King to enter the *tower*, or fortified part of the palace, and to rouse his attendants to his defence. Meanwhile, James, hearing the well-known cry of 'Bothwell! Bothwell!' which at that moment arose without, obeyed the man's directions with the utmost haste, taking care to gather all his armed friends around him, and to store his fortalice with such victuals as might enable him to hold out a siege for some hours, till he might be rescued by his subjects. Bothwell now subjected the tower to a regular beleaguerment: his men fired at every aperture where they thought a bullet might take effect; and the courtiers, in their turn, directed their shot from the same apertures against the assailants. At last, Bothwell having become convinced that he had lost his opportunity, he retired in despair, and permitted his men to procure some repose on the ascent of the Lomond Hill, opposite the Palace; but towards seven in the morning, dreading lest the country people might assemble, and enable the King to turn the assault upon himself, he caused his men to rifle the royal stables, the park, and the town, of all the horses they could find, and, having thus done all he could to prevent a pursuit, he made the best of his way to the south of the Forth, designing to take his company back to their fastnesses on the Borders. So speedily was the alarm of this *raid* spread over the country, that before night James was at the head of a body of three thousand men, partly from the Fife towns, and

partly even from Perthshire and Angus. But the want of horses, and Bothwell's precipitate retreat, prevented him from putting these good friends to any use. Eighteen men were next day seized on Calder Muir, where they had fallen asleep from mere fatigue;—they were brought to Edinburgh, and, as they were all persons of infamous character, the whole were hanged at once without ceremony.

The rest of this year was spent in vain attempts to seize the troublesome person, who had thus, for the second time, put him into fear of his life. From town to town, and from valley to valley, James continued for several weeks to follow his volatile enemy, exposing himself to general ridicule, and much danger, without ever once getting near him. At this period, moreover, the conduct of the clergy formed no small addition to his troubles. As might have been expected, the benefit which he had bestowed upon these men, in placing them above all law, produced no amelioration in their severe and intractable character. Esteeming themselves equal, if not superior to himself, they now proceeded to act as a sort of government, without the least regard to his authority, or that of any other jurisdiction in the land. It was fortunate for him, that their first attempts were of a ridiculous and unpopular character. Conceiving that the commerce, which was then carried on to a considerable extent between Scotland and Spain, was apt to endanger the Protestant principles of their own merchants, they suddenly gave out an edict, forbidding these persons ever again to traffic with the country in question. They also forbade, in a particular manner, that any tallow or wax should ever

again be transported to Spain, whither, it seems, the Scotch merchants had been in the habit of carrying considerable quantities of those articles, to be converted into candles for the shrines of the saints, and for the idolatrous service, as the ministers were pleased to term it, of the mass. Inspired with the same over-pious, though no doubt sincere notions regarding a market which was held in Edinburgh every Monday, they forbade that assemblage, under the pretext that it caused people to begin journies and attend to secular business on Sunday. The people, who felt too particular an interest in these matters to brook interference with them, soon convinced their pastors that they were stepping a little beyond their commission; on which occasion, James is said to have lifted up his hands, and expressed his surprise, that shoemakers and skippers had done what, *he* had never been able to do. Such was really the case. But however unable the clergy might be to legislate for the people, they at all times showed themselves possessed both of the power and the will to tyrannise over their sovereign.

Calderwood relates various anecdotes of James, as appropriate to this period. It was the conviction of this ecclesiastical historian, and probably was also that of the clergy in general, that there could be no sincere religion in the King's heart: he had been heard to call Calvin's Institution 'a childish work,' and had sometimes applied the ludicrous epithet of 'the holy sisters' to a certain coterie of religious women who lived in Edinburgh! This was a sentiment quite in the spirit of the age, when, to think differently from the multitude upon any little matter of form, or to utter the most tri-

vial expression of ridicule regarding 'the rigidly righteous,' was enough to procure a sentence of excommunication. But the most curious anecdote remains. It must be given in Calderwood's own words.

'There came from Aberdeen a young woman, called Helen Guthry, daughter to John Guthry, saddler, to admonish the King of his duty. She was so disgusted with the sinnes reigning in the country, swearing, filthy speaking, profanation of the Sabbath, &c., that she could find no rest till she came to the King. She presented a letter to him when he was going to see his hounds. After he had read a little of it, he fell a laughing that he could scarce stand on his feet, and swore horribly, saying the very women could not spare to reprove him. He asked if she was a prophetess. She answered she was a puir simple servant of God, that prayed to make him a servant of God also, that was desirous vice should be punished, and specially murder, which was chiefly craved at his hands: that she could find no rest till she put him in mind of his duty. After the King and council had stormed a while, she was sent to the Queen, whom she found more courteous and humane. Soe many and great were the enormities in the country through impunity and want of justice, that the minds of puir simple young women were disquieted, as ye may see; but the King and court had deaf eares to the crying sinnis.'

But at this crisis, when James was distressed beyond measure by Bothwell and the clergy, there happened an incident which occasioned to him, if possible, still greater uneasiness—namely, the discovery of a conspiracy among the Catholics. Though the

failure of the Spanish armada in 1588, had given a most severe blow to the resources of this body throughout Europe, yet it appears that they never for a day ceased their exertions for the extirpation of heresy. There was now a project on foot, among the Scottish nobles who had appeared in in arms on the former occasion, to receive a new Spanish fleet in some of the northern firths, to revive, by means of it, the Catholic church in Scotland, and then to invade England, either with the King, or without him. A gentleman of the name of Ker, brother to Lord Newbattle, was seized on his way out of the country, by the minister of Paisley, and, being searched, was found to carry blank letters, signed with the names of the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus, which, from the terms of the address, were evidently designed for the King of Spain. This was on the 27th of December, 1592. Being brought towards Edinburgh on the succeeding Sunday, the fame of the incident preceded his arrival; and the ministers are recorded to have made short work of their sermons, in order to permit their auditors to go out, 'weill bodin in effeir of weir,' to assist the officers of justice in convoying so monstrous a public enemy to prison. Ker, being examined, confessed the nature and object of his mission, and thereby excited in the public mind a degree of indignation and alarm of which it is now impossible to form any idea. The King, who was enjoying his Christmas with the Earl and Countess of Mar at Alloa, was immediately sent for. The Earl of Angus, one of the guilty nobles, happening to come to Edinburgh, was seized by the provost and confined in Edinburgh Castle. While yet the King was absent, a small knot of

the ministers took it upon them, in virtue of their sovereign power and infallibility, to write letters to all their best friends within a wide circle, desiring them to convene at Edinburgh on the 8th of January, that they might consult about measures for the safety of the church. When James returned, he presumed to chide them in his usual gentle way, for making an unlawful convocation of the lieges. But they were too much engrossed by the magnitude of the end they had in view, to regard *his* individual interests; and he was soon compelled to go along with the tide of popular opinion, as inspired and guided by these men, at the risk of otherwise losing his life or his crown.

James was exceedingly averse from taking any severe measures with the Catholics. He had, in the first place, strong political reasons for endeavouring to conciliate them; for they threatened to endeavour all they could to bar his succession to the English crown. It was, in a great measure, as the price of permission to deal leniently with them, that he had lately assented to the demands of the Presbyterians. Whether he secretly entertained any favour for their doctrines or not, it would be difficult to discover: probably, he thought on this subject, as his contemporary Lord Herbert avows himself to have thought, and as every man of just thinking and humanity must now think, namely, that 'the points agreed upon on both sides are greater bonds of amity betwixt the two faiths, than the points disagreed on should break them;' and, certainly, in all his polemical works, the only point of the Catholic religion which he seems to hold in abhorrence, is the Pope's supremacy. Among other reasons which he had for acting leniently in the

present case, were his personal friendship for the parties accused, their attachment and good service to him—Angus had just returned from the North, where he had quelled a serious disturbance—and perhaps a conviction, that the utmost object of their conspiracy was to procure a relaxation of the severe persecution which the established clergy had lately set on foot against them; a persecution which went the length of making them outlaws in the land, and which was rather increasing than declining in rigour.

But his own sentiments on this subject were too completely the reverse of those entertained by the public in general, to be acted on. Borne along by the popular current, which he had no means of resisting, he was obliged to permit the execution of David Graham of Fintry, a gentleman inculpated by Ker's dispatches; and he had soon after to put himself at the head of an army, and go to the North, for the purpose of seizing the three Catholic Earls. It was only at a considerable risk, that, on finding the nobles fled from their houses, he could take it upon him to abstain from destroying their property and incarcerating their families;—the Earl of Angus meanwhile escaped from Edinburgh, not without suspicions of his connivance;—and but for the prospect of seeing them forfaulted in a parliament which he had called to meet in July, the people would have been thrown, by these symptoms of leniency, into a condition of open rebellion.

The parliament met on the 14th of July; but as the popular clamours had abated a little by that time, he did not find it necessary to permit the forfeiture to be pronounced: it was found sufficient to adjourn the parliament till November,

and to promise that justice should then be done; James, however, took this opportunity to have Bothwell declared guilty of high treason, and his whole estates declared to be forfeited; but strange to say, at the very time when the Earl was thus, to all appearance, ruined past redemption—on the very day when, to mark his degradation from the rank of a noble and the character of a man, his arms were riven by a herald at the market-cross of Edinburgh—he was on the point of regaining the place he had lost in the King's court and counsels.

For some time before this, the court had been divided into two factions; one of which consisted of James himself, and his faithful and sagacious minister, Lord Thirlstane; the other had the Queen for its head, and comprehended the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Athole, Lord Ochiltree, and in general all the noblemen and gentlemen of the name of Stewart. The prime cause of the dissention had been Thirlstane's refusal to yield up to her Majesty the regality of Musselburgh, which, as part of the abbacy of Dunfermline, she conceived to belong of right to her. To avoid her displeasure, and relieve the King from domestic disquiet, Thirlstane had retired for some months to enjoy the quiet glades and gardens of his seat of Lethington. In his absence, the Queen and the Stewarts reigned in triumph. James at length alarmed them one day by stealing away from his hounds and hunting attendants, and taking a secret journey to Lethington, where he spent a night with the Chancellor; after which a report arose that Thirlstane was about to return to court. To prevent this, the Stewarts resolved to bring in the

Earl of Bothwell, whom they had all along favoured, and whose cause they now thought it their duty to take in hand, because, from his name being the same with theirs, it was, according to the ideas of that age, almost, if not entirely, their own. *

Accordingly, on the 23d of July, Bothwell was secretly brought to Edinburgh, with a single companion, and lodged in the house of the Countess of Gowrie, behind the palace. During the course of the day, the Earl of Athole (a Stewart), took occasion to come to court, with a considerable band of retainers; and late at night, the gates of the palace were quietly occupied by these men. When the proper moment arrived, the Countess of Athole, who had been in the palace, bidding the King and Queen good night, passed with her train through a posterior way which led to the house of her mother Lady Gowrie, where she was to lodge for the night. No sooner was that door made patent to her, than Bothwell and his friend Colville entered the precincts of the palace, and, passing up what was called the *Chapel stair*, got into the Long Gallery, at the end of which was the door of the King's chamber. They were disguised: each carried only his naked sword in his hand; but, to make quite sure of the safety of their persons as they moved along,

* In the reign of James VI., *name* went as great a way in the Lowlands, in dividing and assorting parties, as it did more lately in the Highlands. Wodrow, in his life of Mr David Ferguson, minister of Dunfermline, [*MS. Glasgow University Library*] mentions, that that minister, in a conversation with the King in 1583, said he wished there were no such thing as a surname in Scotland, because there might then be hope of an end to civil broils. The King assented to his wish with great emphasis.

the train of the Countess of Athole had returned with them from the door by which they entered. On their knocking at the King's chamber-door, it was opened by the Earl of Athole. James was at that moment in a small closet off the principal chamber. Before he came forth, Bothwell and Colville had arranged themselves on their knees upon the floor, with their faces towards the closet-door, and their swords laid cross-wise before them. James, who, at their entrance, was in the most awkward and defenceless condition that the reader could suppose, no sooner opened the door of his closet, than he saw fully before him the man who, for three years, had been the pest of his life, and had more than once during that period put it into danger. Alarmed and indignant, but indignation predominating over alarm—as vexation at being found in unkingly dishabille was his most immediate feeling—he threw himself into a chair, and seemed for the moment to have lost his usual regard to life.

"Strike, traitor!" he cried, "strike, and make an end of thy work; I desire not to live any longer!"

Bothwell, continuing on his knees, vehemently affirmed that he came only to entreat for pardon, and put himself into his Majesty's will; to which James replied, that mercy extorted by violence was not mercy, and that it was not the form or practice of petitioners to come with weapons in their hands. At that instant, the lords who had contrived the plot, entered the chamber, and, putting themselves between Bothwell and the King, with one voice entreated for mercy to their suppliant friend. James then perceived the nature of

the enterprise. 'He asked what they meant—Came they to seek his life?—Let them take it—They could not get his soul. And he finished by crying, "Treason!" They soon succeeded, however, if not in pacifying him, at least in bringing him to hear what Bothwell had to say for himself. The kneeling nobleman then asseverated still more emphatically, that his present enterprise was conceived in no disrespect or evil intention towards his Majesty, but only to procure that justice from the King which he could not obtain from his ministers. He offered to undergo trial for witchcraft, or for seeking the King's life, directly or indirectly; and, after he should be tried and purged, he professed his willingness to depart from the country, if such should be his Majesty's desire. In the event of being permitted to remain in Scotland, he promised "to join himself to no other course than his Majesty should command, to attempt no novation of the estate, nor change of officers of estate, and *to like of them whom his Majesty liked.*" *

James had all along been, as the reader has perceived, a sovereign only in name. He had ever been the plaything of one party or another; and his only power, at any time, lay in the comparative strength of the party with which he happened to be connected. Time, in the present case, might have enabled him to devise expedients for resisting Bothwell's importunities; but, surprised as he was, and completely in the hands of that nobleman and his partisans, he had no course but to receive him again into his court. Being advised to do so by the Earl of Mar, who was his endeared friend, and

* Calderwood, MS.

the only man present not upon the conspiracy, he at length consented to a sort of amnesty with Bothwell, whereby, upon his promise of peaceable behaviour, and non-interference with affairs of state, he promised him a fair trial, and, in case of his being acquitted, a restoration to his estates and rank in society.

Just as this matter was on the point of being adjusted, a band of the citizens of Edinburgh, gathered at the sound of an alarm-bell, and headed by their Provost, Sir Alexander Home of North Berwick, came to the palace, for the purpose of protecting the King. Home, who was a favourite with James, taking his station below the windows of the royal apartment, called for the King to come and speak to him. Bothwell was at deadly feud with all of the name of Home; and he feared that any violence on the part of this intruder might spoil the whole of his project. He therefore requested the King to dismiss him with a soft answer. James, accordingly, leant over the window to hold conference with his friend. Home desired, in the first place, to know his Majesty's circumstances and will, offering that he and his company should rescue him, if he were in restraint, or else lose their lives. James, at the dictation, it is said, of the Earl of Mar, answered, that "the Earl of Bothwell had come in upon him, by his expectation and fore-knowledge, that he had promised fair for the future, and, if he should keep true, he (the King) should keep true to him." Then, thanking him and the citizens for their ready service, he requested them to retire to the churchyard behind the palace, and he should in time give them a further explanation of his circumstances.

They retired accordingly; and Home, being soon after called back, was told that the King and Bothwell were finally agreed. The citizens of course dispersed; but it was impossible for Bothwell to omit the opportunity of expressing his rage against the officious Provost. Leaning over the same window, he told Sir Alexander that "he had done, could do, and would do, as much in the King's service as any Home in the Merse, and he would reckon with him another time." * Perhaps no circumstance could have borne more lively testimony to the singularly violent temper of this noted personage.

Bothwell was thus restored to the favour of his sovereign in the style and manner proper to the age. But he was not destined to retain, for any length of time, the advantages he had gained. James was too decidedly implacable towards him, and was held by too insecure a bondage, to continue long in his power. His back had no sooner been turned in compliance with their articles of agreement, than the King began to take measures for shaking him off. He re-appeared on the 10th of August, and was acquitted by an assize of the crime of witchcraft. But the King had by that time laid his plans so well, that the Earl was not permitted to accompany him to the hunting at Falkland. On the 7th of September, in a convention held at Stirling, his Majesty had sufficient influence to procure an absolution from his agreement with Bothwell, and a confirmation of the former sentence of forfeiture. The Earl was then forbidden, by a proclamation, to come within ten

* Calderwood, MS.

miles of any place where his Majesty might be. Thrown into new despair by this harsh procedure, Bothwell entered into an arrangement with his friend the Earl of Athole, for bringing down a Highland army to assist him in forcing justice. But James, by an uncommon exertion, was able to defeat his plan. He no sooner heard that the Earl of Athole was at Doune, than, taking horse at Linlithgow, he rode to meet him, a strong guard going before under Lord Home, with orders to kill Athole if they could reach him; while 'the whole country,' as an old historian expresses it, followed the King to give him their best assistance. Home, who was a Catholic, and at this time most zealous in the royal service, met the Earl of Montrose, one of Athole's associates, whom he took into custody, after some rough usage. When James came up, he was so transported with passion against this nobleman, that he rushed towards him with a drawn sword, and would have taken his life, if he had not been prevented by the Lord Hamilton;* a demonstration of temper which seems to be quite unparalleled in the history of the pacific King. Bothwell, thus deprived of support, retired for a time into the obscurity from which he had lately emerged in so singular a manner.†

* Johnston's Hist. of Scot. MS. Adv. Library.

† Connected with Bothwell's unsuccessful attempt is a simple tale of love, which the contemporary historians are fond of relating, in all its particulars, though it hangs as strangely upon their pages as the Italian tapestry on the old storied walls of Holyroodhouse. It is thus given in the *Historie of King James the First*:—

'In this close tyme it fortumit that a gentleman called

Meanwhile, James was precipitated into new quarrels with the clergy. After the parliament in July, which postponed the forfeiture of the Catholic lords for want of evidence, the Synod of Fife, at that time the most furiously zealous in Scot-

Weymis of Logye, being also in credence at court, was delatit as a traffecker with Francis Earl of Bothwell; and he being examinat before King and Counsel, confessit his accusation to be of veritie, that sundry times he had spoken with him, expresslie aganis the King's inhibition proclamit in the contrare, whilk confession he subscrywit with his hand; and because the event of this mater had sik a success, it sall also be prayait by my pen, as a worthie turne, whilk suld in no ways be obscurit from the posteritie, for the gude example; and therefore I have thought gude to insert the same for a perpetual memorie.

'Queen Anne, our noble princess, was servit with diverse gentilwemen of hir awin countrie, and naymlie with ane callit Mres Margarat Twynstoun, to whom this gentilman, Weymes of Logye, bure great honest affection, tending to the godlie band of marriage; the quhilk was honestlie requytet by the said gentilwoman, yea evin in his greatest mister; for howsone she understude the said gentilman to be in distress, and apperantlie by his confession to be puneist to the death, and she having privilege to lye in the Queynis chalmer that same verie night of his accusation, whare the King was also reposing that same night, she came furth of the dure prevelie, bayth the prencis being then at quyet rest, and fast to the chalmer, whare the said gentilman was put in custody to certayne of the garde, and commandit thayme that immediatlie he sould be brought to the King and Queyne, whereunto they geving sure credence, obeyit. But howsone she was come back to the chalmer dure, she desyrit the watches to stay till he sould come furth agayne, and so she closit the dure, and convoyit the gentilman to a window, whare she ministrat a long corde unto him to convoy himself doun upon; and sae be hir gude cheritable help he happilie escaplt be the subteltie of loove.'

More than one imagination has been exerted in turning this story to the purposes of fiction. There is an old bal-

land, fulminated a sentence of excommunication against them. James was seriously offended at finding his schemes thus traversed by men altogether destitute of right to interfere with them; and he called the celebrated Mr Robert Bruce before him, to explain the conduct of his brethren. Bruce answered, that none could question the conduct of the Synod but the General Assembly. "Well," said the King, justly provoked at the usurpation which he saw the clergy were determined to carry into effect, "I could have no rest till you got that which you call the discipline of the church established; now, seeing I have found it abused, and none amongst you hath power to stay such disorderly proceedings, I will think of a mean to help it." And he appears, after this, to have resolved upon the restoration of the Episcopal order, as the only rational expedient for procuring that correspondence in the management of church and state which he saw to be necessary to good government.

The Catholic lords thought this a good opportunity for approaching him, and urging in person, the merits of their case against the persecuting disposition of the clergy. Accordingly, on the 12th of October, as he was riding to Lauder to see the Chancellor, they came up to him at Fala, and, falling upon their knees, entreated that they might not be condemned, as the clergy seemed determined that they should, without being heard, but that they might

lad, founded on the incident, called the 'Laird o' Logie,' which is to be found in most collections; and it is the subject of a delightful tale in a modern work, entitled, 'The Odd Volume.'

be allowed a fair trial. James, who certainly was aware of their coming, received them with an appearance of embarrassment, real or affected; but, in the end, would allow them no greater favour than a promise that they should have a trial. They then parted; he to hold a justice-aire at Jedburgh, and they to assemble their friends, to ensure themselves of a fair, or perhaps we should rather say, a favourable assize. When the clergy learned what had taken place, they sent a deputation, charged with the most violent declamations against the lords, and commissioned to insist upon the right which the professors of the gospel had to act as both accusers and assize upon their trial. But so unconstitutional a proceeding, and a demand so contrary to all reason or justice, could not be tolerated. James utterly refused to accede to their wishes. They then resolved to convocate the country in arms, at the place of trial, in order to overawe the administrators of justice and the friends of the accused. James, however, eventually used measures to soften away the asperities of their temper; and an arrangement was at last made, called the *Act of Abolition*, by which the Catholic lords were offered pardon on condition of their renouncing Popery, and finding security for their peaceable behaviour, before the first of February.

It was in the midst of these troubles that James's first child, Prince Henry, saw the light. After having been married upwards of five years, the Queen was delivered at Stirling Castle, on the 19th of February 1593-4. The happy news was received throughout Scotland with the most vivid demonstrations of joy; the people every where vying with each other in expressing their happiness,

by kindling bale-fires, by dancing, and playing on instruments, 'as gif (says honest Patrick Johnston) they had been mad for mirth.'

The excommunicated Earls, as might have been expected, refused to abandon their religion; and James was then obliged to issue an edict commanding them to enter into prison, under the pain of being denounced as rebels, in a parliament which he cited to appear in June.

Before that time arrived, he had another collision with the restless Earl of Bothwell. It was told at the palace, early in the morning of the 2nd of April, that Bothwell had come to Leith during the night, with four hundred horse. James, utterly destitute of a guard or standing army of any kind, was under the necessity of soliciting the town of Edinburgh for their assistance. He accordingly went to the church, and, after the sermon, addressed the people in a speech calculated to inflame them against Bothwell, as the leader of a band of Borderers, who would have no respect for their property, in case of gaining any advantage over him. Thus inspired, the people put on their armour, and accompanied him along the road to Leith. When Bothwell learned the numbers that were marching against him, he thought proper to retire, by Restalrig and Daddingston, to a place called Woomet, near Dalkeith. James now shifted his position to the Borough-Muir, so as to be betwixt Bothwell and the town. After some time, Lord Home led out a party of horse, and attacked the enemy at Edmondstone, but was immediately worsted and pursued back to the main body, by Bothwell's troopers. At sight of that flying body, those around the King recommended that he should

seek refuge for his own person in the town, as a battle was now likely to take place. But he said "he would never quit the field to a traiter." Fortunately, as Bothwell was advancing, his horse fell under him, and occasioned so severe an injury to his person, that he found it prudent to draw off to Dalkeith. Soon after, becoming disheartened by the firm appearance made by the King, he dismissed his forces, and once more went into retirement.

At various times during the late disturbed period, Queen Elizabeth sent ambassadors to urge James to prosecute the Popish lords with vigour. He contrived, however, to evade all her requests, by counter petitions, that she would apprehend, or at least allow no refuge to the Earl of Bothwell, who had often found protection and even assistance in her dominions. On her at last urging him with more than usual vehemency, he pleaded poverty as the only obstacle to his proceedings, and begged that she would assist him with money in this matter, as she had already assisted the Protestants of France and the Low Countries against the Catholics. But she did not think the danger great enough to require that measure of prevention. It is to be inferred, indeed, from her whole behaviour during these troubles, that she took, in a great measure, the same cool view of the guilt of the three Earls which was taken by James himself.

Calderwood, in his minute narrative of the transactions of this time, relates a characteristic anecdote of the King. A troop of horse, which James had contrived to levy, was, on the 30th of May, mustered at Leith Links, to pass in review before him. He went through the ranks, in his familiar

gossiping way, asking the name of each individual soldier. Coming to one whose name was Christison, he said "Gif ye were in Sanct Geilles kirk, with ane psalme buik in your hand, ye wald be called ane haly man." And the grave historian records, that such profane speeches were frequent in his mouth. The truth is, wherever there is a party of ostentatious and immoderate devotees, there will always be a set of people, who, without serious irreligion, will assume the opposite mode of behaviour; and James, whose rational mind revolted at the furious zeal of his own clergy, was induced often, by mere disgust, to express himself in a way that looked profane, while in reality his mind was impressed with much sincere piety. This theory received a thorough illustration in the reign of his grandson Charles II, when the adherents of the court discarded almost every external mark of religion, purely from a principle of antipathy to the puritans, whose conduct in the preceding reign had induced a belief that piety was synonymous with madness and sedition. It is the happiest age which is characterized by a comparatively equal diffusion of religious feeling over all parts of the community.

Bothwell, who had hitherto pretended great zeal for the established church, and who had therefore been considerably favoured by the clergy, was now induced, by despair of that course of action, to attempt one altogether different. He entered into a coalition with the three Catholic Earls. Perhaps, it was that circumstance which first excited sincere anger in James, against the men whom his subjects and clergy had so long urged him to persecute. At the meeting of parliament in June, he

began his speech by saying, that "he had used plaster and medicine hitherto in dealing with his rebellious lords, but, that not availing, he was now to use fire as the last remedy." And he permitted, without further scruple, the long desired act of forfeiture to be passed against the Earls, and made arrangements with the estates assembled, to raise an army for their destruction.

In the rude times under review, before standing armies were known, it was often found impossible to suppress a rebellious noble, by any other plan than that of granting a commission to his chief feudal enemy, empowering him to proceed against the obnoxious person, with the double prospect of gratified revenge and cupidity. James, in prosecuting the Popish Earls, was obliged at first to resort to this dangerous expedient. He granted his commission to the Earls of Argyle and Athole and Lord Forbes, who were the grand enemies of the Huntly interest, and who, for the prospect of dividing that immense estate amongst them, would probably have made no scruple to fight Protestants as well as Catholics. It affords a strange view of the age, that the presbyterian ministers, instead of expressing any disapprobation of what would now be esteemed so unchristian a mode of procedure, sent some of their number to urge Argyle to undertake the King's commission. It was, perhaps, only in consequence of their pious appliances to these men, that the Earl did eventually take arms; for it is known that he at first expressed some hesitation on account of his age, which was only eighteen.

Meanwhile, on the 6th of September, the baptism of Prince Henry was celebrated at Stirling

Castle, in the presence of ambassadors from most of the Protestant princes of Europe, and in a style of magnificence suitable to the birth and prospects of so illustrious a child. The Queen of England was represented by the Earl of Sussex as godmother; in which relation, it will be recollected, she also stood to King James himself. The established clergy were not permitted to act so prominent a part in this solemnity as at the Queen's coronation. The ceremony was performed by David Cunningham, who still retained, notwithstanding all the late proceedings against Episcopacy, the title of Bishop of Aberdeen; and the only other ministers present were men well known to be more devoted to the King than the kirk.

The young Earl of Argyle moved, about the end of September, from his own territory in the West Highlands, accompanied by vassals and friends to the amount of six thousand men, of whom fifteen hundred were musketeers, of regular appointment, while the rest were only untrained Highlanders, armed with bows and arrows, or with two-handed swords—weapons which remained in use among that primitive people for several ages after they had been abandoned every where else. This immense host travelled through the whole space of the central Highlands, till they came to Glenlivat, a valley within two days journey of Strathbogie, the chief stronghold of the Earl of Huntly. If they had been a little more deliberate in their march, they would have been joined by the Forbeses, and other clans, who, from feudal hate to Huntly, were inclined to adventure in this quarrel; but Argyle was so confident in his present force, that he wished no longer to delay an

engagement with the enemy. He sent a taunting message to Strathbogie, warning the Earl that he was about to visit him: Huntly answered, that "he sould be porter himself, and sould mak the passages of the palace patent unto him before his coming, and sould welcome him by the way, as effeired." * He then, with the assistance of the Earl of Errol, mustered the whole of his dependants, to the amount of twelve or fourteen hundred men, chiefly gentlemen and their servants, and almost all on horseback—whom he 'exhorted to defend him in his just cause at that time; for he took God to witness that he had no other cause to fight against the barbarous enemy, but first for the glory of God, and for the liberty of his and their consciences, which were enthralled by such as were pernicious enemies to all truth and verity,' and who had at this time, by false acts, animated the King against him. He assured them that he loved and reverenced the King with heart and mind, as a good subject, and would never be prevailed upon to enter the field against him, even in a just cause. But, 'since they had to do with an enemy, in whom was neither fear of God, nor obedience to the Prince, nor good manners at all, he besought them there, in God's name, to behave valiantly.' He then led forward his forces against Argyle, whom he encountered at a place called Balrinnes, on the afternoon of the 3d of October.

The Presbyterian leader was somewhat disconcerted at the sight of Huntly's army, for he had been led to believe that no stand whatever would

* As was consistent with proper etiquette.—*Historie of King James the Sext, Bann. Club, Ed. p.* 339.

be made against him. As his position, however, was very advantageous, (on the side of a hill full of moss and bogs), and as he had advantage of both sun and wind, he resolved upon fighting. Huntly, whose part it rather was to have hesitated, from the comparative slenderness of his force, sent forward a vanguard, consisting of two hundred horse, under the command of the Earl of Errol, and courageously led on the remainder in person. He had four pieces of artillery on carts, which he caused to be kept concealed from the view of the enemy till the moment when they should have approached near enough to give an effective fire. His progress was slow, partly from the steepness of the hill, and partly from the heath and bogs which rendered it difficult to the feet of his horse; but he at length arrived within the proper distance. Then suddenly causing his vanguard to recede from the front of the artillery, he fired them off with great effect against the massive battalions of Argyle; who, ignorant that he possessed this means of offence, and regarding cannon in the abstract with a sort of superstitious terror, fell flat on their faces, and could not be prevailed upon to rise again so long as the noise continued. To improve his advantage, Huntly caused his vanguard at this moment to make a detour to the right, so as to fall in upon the enemy's flank. They did so with all the speed possible on such broken ground; but before they accomplished their object, the Highland leaders, rousing their men from the ground, caused them to throw off a flight of arrows at the advancing horse, such as palpably darkened the air, if we are to believe the report of some eye-witnesses, for a quarter of an hour. Errol's troop,

nevertheless, dashed in upon the rear of the Presbyterian army, and began an unequal contest, which might have soon ended in his complete destruction, if Huntly had not at that moment advanced, with all the remainder of his forces, and distracted the chief attention of the Celtic leaders to the front. A general and most destructive fight then took place. The Lowland cavaliers every where found advantage over the ill-armed Highlanders, and produced a dreadful slaughter; but the Highlanders, nevertheless, contrived to give their assailants a number of severe wounds. At length, after two hours of hard fighting, the legions of Argyle began to give way before those of Aberdeenshire; and a flight soon after commenced, which all the efforts of the chiefs were unable to restrain. Casting away at once arms and clothing, and never once looking behind them, the despairing Highlanders ascended the hill, where no horse could follow, and, descending the other side, sought their way home. A small portion, chiefly natives of the Western Isles, retired in a more respectable fashion, under the charge of the Chief of Maclean, who, clad in a jack and murrion, and armed with the primitive weapon called a Danish axe, had acted on this day as Argyle's lieutenant, and behaved with great gallantry. Argyle himself was hurried off the field, weeping with rage at the bad success of his arms.

In this battle of Glenlivat, or Balrinnes, full five hundred of Argyle's forces were slain, including the Laird of Lochnell and his brother, heirs-presumptive to the commander. On Huntly's side fell Patrick Gordon of Auchindown, uncle to the Earl, with a small number of men; while Errol and many others were severely wounded. It

is certainly to be regretted, that the zeal of the clergy, moved as it was by the best intentions, should have led to a slaughter so extensive as this, and of which the necessity was so doubtful, even supposing their ends to have been expedient. There is at least something very horrible in the idea of enlisting the bad passions of a rude people in a quarrel which was not properly their own, and thus, as it were, attempting to perform God's work by the agency of fiends. Assuredly, no cause, however sacred, could justify means so very inconsistent with the principles of humanity, so adverse to the precepts of religion itself.

James was at Dundee, preparing, in his own person, for an expedition to the North, when the young Earl of Argyle, accompanied by only two men out of all his late force, arrived, travel-worn and exhausted, to relate the news of his defeat. The King immediately marched northward, with the small force he had already collected, being afraid that a little time might allow the Catholic lords to become too powerful for him. But by the time he reached Aberdeen, he learned that Huntly and Errol were so much weakened by the severe conflict they had had with Argyle, as to be unable to make head a second time, and that they were now willing to quit the kingdom. All that then remained was to march into the country over which these nobles exercised a territorial jurisdiction, and put in force the late act of parliament, by casting down their strongholds, and taking caution from their dependants. For some time, James was prevented from doing this by the state of the weather, and by the slowness with which his levies came in to him; but he at length accomplish-

ed it, in January 1594–5. Strathbogie and Slaines Castles, the seats of the Earls of Huntly and Errol, were destroyed. The Earls retired beyond seas, upon a composition; but their vassals were more severely handled, for according to the report of a very simple annalist, 'all gentilmen war appardonit for payment of sowmes of money, and the puir war puneist to the death.' The ladies of the rebel lords were permitted, however, to retain the rents of their estates; the Countess of Huntly being the daughter of the late Duke of Lennox, and high in the King's favour. Indeed, to ensure that the business of quieting the country should be transacted with a sufficiently tender regard to the interests of this esteemed person, he left her brother, the young Duke of Lennox, as his lieutenant, when he himself found it necessary to retire to the South.

The country was now in some measure pacified; and, to add to James's triumphs, his old enemy the Earl of Bothwell at last found it expedient to seek a refuge abroad. A year of tranquillity ensued, marked by no event of importance, except an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the Queen and a faction of the courtiers, to deprive the Earl of Mar of the custody of Prince Henry. On the 3d of October, the King and country were deprived of the services of the Chancellor, Lord Thirlstane, who, after an administration of about ten years, made 'a godly end' at his house of Lauder Fort, much lamented by all ranks of men, but especially by the King. James honoured his memory with a copy of verses, which, as Dr Robertson remarks, 'when compared with the compositions of the age, are far from being inelegant.'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OCTAVIANS—TUMULT OF THE SEVENTEENTH OF DECEMBER—PUBLICATION OF THE BASILICON DORON.

1596—1599.

In January 1595–6, James resolved upon a measure, which eventually had a very material effect upon the character of his government, and, in a more particular manner, upon the fortunes of the church. Finding, as he himself declares in a proclamation, that the rents of his crown were in a state of confusion and decay, and that, by the maladministration of his finances, he was at last arrived at such a pitch of poverty, that 'there was neither wheat nor beir (barley), silver nor other rent, to serve his house sufficiently in bread and drink, or otherways;' he selected eight gentlemen of the law, the most acute in talent, and the most expert in business, upon whom he devolved the whole management of his revenue in every department, binding himself, upon the word of a prince, to interfere in no manner with their proceedings, and allowing them the important privilege of filling up every vacancy that might occur in their own number. So extensive were the powers which seemed to be conferred upon this

body, or rather so completely did the King appear to have resigned his own power into their hands, that the people, on hearing the proclamation, universally remarked, that he had only left to himself the name of sovereign. The gentlemen of his court had the same impression; and it was generally supposed that he must now lose the services of even that small portion of his subjects, from inability to hold out the proper emoluments. But the results were quite of a contrary nature.

The first acts of the Octavians—so they were popularly called from their number—had reference only to their proper business, the public finances. By and by, however, being enabled, by the control they acquired over money matters, to extend their views further, they began to seize the principal offices of the state, and to exercise a more direct influence over the machinery of government. The offices of Treasurer, King's Advocate, Comptroller, and Lord Privy Seal, successively fell into their hands: their president was only prevented from gaining the Chancellorship, which was the very highest office in the kingdom, by the circumstance of his being obnoxious to public suspicion on account of Catholicism. Their rapid advances to supreme power excited the alarm of the church, because a moiety of them were Catholics—and the hostility of the nobles, in so far as they were all younger brothers, or men of no family; whereas, to give an office to any other man than a peer, was looked upon in Scotland as something monstrous. Yet, notwithstanding all the outcry raised against them, they kept their places, and managed the affairs of the kingdom with an amazing degree of vigour. Talent, the naked quality for which

the King had selected them, was found, even in this rude age, so far to transcend all merely external pretensions.

The arrangement was found to be, in every respect, a fortunate one for James. It supplied him with what he most wanted in personal character, the power of saying, "No," to unreasonable requests, and of acting with firmness in the protection of his prerogative against the frequent invasions which were made upon it. Nor was he exposed to the least danger of having his power altogether transferred into the hands of the Octavians. They were forced, by the hostility of the nobles, the church, and the people, to keep close under his wing: their power depended too immediately and too exclusively upon his personal will, to put himself in the least danger. In effect, his government acquired, by this arrangement, all the advantages of vigour and accuracy; and there was now exhibited, for the first time, in Scotland, a ministry selected upon principles at all approaching to those which dictate the construction of a British cabinet in modern times.

It was hardly to be expected that the clergy would behold such an alteration in the government without great alarm. This order of men entertained sentiments on the subject of an administration not less exclusive than those entertained by the nobility. The latter conceived that birth and following were the only requisites in a ministry: the clergy thought it enough if they were sound Protestants and favourable to the church. Hitherto, it had been only by the weakness of James's government, that the church acquired or held its privileges; of course, the clergy supposed that this immense

addition to its strength augured unfavourably to their long possession of its privileges. They, therefore, took every opportunity of inveighing against the Octavians; declaimed against the King on every occasion for his overlooking religious principle in the selection of his advisers; and did not scruple, in their private interviews, to rebuke him in language of the most poignant severity.

But it is evident that the clergy had now arrived at that pitch when vaulting ambition overleaps itself, and falls on the other side. Prosperity had, to a certain extent, spoilt them. The power they had acquired over the public mind; their exemption from the control of the state; the deference paid to them of late years by the government, which *ventured upon no measure without begging their consent;* the rapturous idea in which they lived, that they were the immediate officers of the Divinity:—all these circumstances had had their proper effect in inspiring them with that degree of pride which bodes a fall. One circumstance, out of hundreds which are recorded in their church-histories, will be sufficient to prove this to the satisfaction of the reader.

James was now anxious to restore the Catholic lords. Finding that the persecution with which he had been compelled to visit them, alienated from him the affections of the English Catholics, and that, by their continuing longer abroad, they were in danger of really attaching themselves to the service of his enemies, he conceived it to be best, both for himself and his country, that they should be permitted to return. As it was necessary to gain the consent of the church to this scheme, he took an opportunity, one day, of sound-

ing Mr Robert Bruce, as to the view which his brethren would probably take of such a measure. Bruce, who had been the prime instigator of the Argyle expedition against Huntly, and who was virtually an archbishop in the church, expressed, as might be expected, great dislike to the scheme. He was at length, however, so far softened as to say, that if Angus and Errol would profess the reformed religion, *they* might perhaps be allowed to come back. Huntly being the man in whom James was most concerned, he condescended to argue with Bruce in favour of that nobleman, and even had the boldness to say at last, that if he brought any of them in, he would bring them all. "Well, well," said this proud puritan, "I see your resolution is to take Huntly in favour. Mark, however, sir, what I say. If you do so, I will oppose it. You must either lose Huntly or me. Take your choice between us, for both you cannot keep!" It is said that, though James had formerly entertained a sincere friendship for Bruce—whom, as has been seen, he trusted a good deal while in Denmark, and even employed to put the crown upon his queen—this exhibition of intolerance and pride was too much for even his nature, and he henceforth studied different measures with this order of his subjects.*

In August 1596, James succeeded in procuring the restoration of the Catholic Lords, notwithstanding all that the clergy could urge against it. Inflamed to the last degree by this offence against their authority, they established a small oligarchy

* Spottiswood, 417. See also Maxwell's Burden of Issachar.

of their number in Edinburgh, to be constantly on the watch for methods of annoying him. But they only precipitated their own destruction. A minister of the name of Black, holding forth at St Andrews, used language of more than usual intemperance in inveighing against all the late public measures; and, resolved to make an example of him, James summoned him before the privy council. The ministers, whose proper course it would have been to resign Black to his resentment, unfortunately for themselves, made it a common cause, and came forward in a body to defend him. A protracted dispute then took place between the King and the church, regarding the royal right to judge of any thing uttered in the pulpit. The clergy affirmed that, in all such ecclesiastical matters, they had a right to judge, at least in the first instance; but James very reasonably objected, that, if they committed secular crimes in the pulpit, it was the temporal courts which should try them. After much wrangling, however, his good nature was so much wrought upon, that he offered to pardon Black, if they would only pass from the declinature which they had presented against the jurisdiction of his privy council; an arrangement which would have exactly undone the whole process, and left the royal and ecclesiastical powers where they were before. But, in the hope of establishing an exemption for their order from the summons of that court, they obstinately held out against his offered kindness, and proceeded to measures more turbulent than ever.

Upon the 17th of December, while the public mind was, from these causes, in an exceedingly feverish state, the King was sitting in the Upper

Tolbooth, amidst the Lords of Session, when a resolution was taken by the commissioners of the church, to present to him a serious public remonstrance against his late measures. Mr Robert Bruce and Lord Lindsay were the chief persons in the committee appointed to carry this remonstrance; and while they were absent, a minister regaled the multitude with an application of the story of Haman to the King. On entering the place where his Majesty sat, Bruce proclaimed, that they were sent by the noblemen and gentlemen convened in the adjacent church, to bewail the dangers in which religion was brought by the late proceedings against ministers and true professors. "What dangers see you?" said James sharply. Bruce answered, by relating a series of circumstances too long for repetition. The King replied, by asking who they were that durst convene against his proclamation. Then Lindsay struck in with an impassioned declaration, that *they durst do more than convene*, and they would not suffer religion to be overthrown. James, justly offended, and seeing a great number of unmannerly people thronging upon his presence, rose and retired to the Lower Tolbooth, causing the doors of communication to be closed behind him.

When the commissioners returned, and related the bad success of their embassy, the minds of the assemblage, previously excited in no small degree by the prelections of the ministers, were thrown into a state of dreadful perturbation. Lindsay declared, "It shall either be theirs or ours"—when there ensued 'a clamour and a lifting of hands, and none could hear what another spake.'* One

* Spottiswood.

individual was at length heard to exclaim, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" Others cried, "Arms, arms!" while a person of the court faction, observing the tumult, and willing to fool it to the top of its bent, cried in at the door, "Fy, save yourselves;" on which there was a rush to the street, and all who could command corslets or weapons put themselves into 'effeir of weir,' and thronged hither and thither in search of the enemy, which existed only in their own imaginations. One immense party crowded to the doors of the house where the King was sitting and, exclaiming, "Bring out the wicked Haman!" in allusion to the text of the late sermon, showed a determination to put an end to his life. James was now seriously alarmed, and not without reason. He sent a messenger, however, by a secret way, to bring his friend the Earl of Mar, with a party, from the castle; which, soon after arriving, overawed the multitude. The Convener of the Trades of Edinburgh, at the same time, did what he could to allay the fury of his fellow-citizens. The tumult finally subsided in a manner almost as unaccountable as that in which it began; and the most of those who had been concerned, sneaked home, as if ashamed of the irritation into which they had been betrayed. When all was quiet, James himself ventured forth from the Tolbooth, and went down the middle of the High Street to the Palace, guarded by the magistrates, and accompanied by some of those very Octavians whose counsels had been the ostensible cause of the tumult.

This affair, which was long after remembered under the epithet of 'the Seventeen' Day of De-

cember,' proved a staggering blow to the pretensions of the clergy. The King did not appear at first very much offended by it. On reflection, however, he seems to have conceived the idea that, by stigmatizing it as treason, and affecting to be enraged beyond all mollification, he might use it as a capital point of reference, whereby to establish the evil tendency of a church cast loose from all civil power, and break the spirit of those secular persons who fortified the ministers in their demands. Retiring, therefore, early next morning, to Linlithgow, he left a proclamation to be uttered at the market-cross of Edinburgh, commanding all persons not regular inhabitants to remove immediately, and ordering that the courts of law should thenceforth be held at Perth. On a submission being made to him two days after by the magistrates, he refused to listen to it. His immediate attendants, taking their cue from him, talked of razing the city to the foundation, and erecting a pillar on its site, with an inscription relating the story of its misdemeanours. He also caused his privy council to declare all who had been concerned in the tumult guilty of treason.

When the citizens learned the extent of his indignation, they at once fell to that pitch of humility which he desired, and, being much more willing to want the *gospel* than the LAW, gave up their clergy, who immediately fled to England. They further offered to give his Majesty thenceforward the power of chusing their magistrates, and also to take no ministers who should not be honoured with his approbation. For a long time, however, he kept them in suspense as to his intentions re-

garding them; but, at length, when he thought them sufficiently depressed, he relaxed a little, and permitted them to remain in possession of their former privileges.

With the clergy as a body, he made much harder terms. Placed by their imprudence in possession of considerable power, which soon began to increase very fast, as his prospect of succeeding to Elizabeth became more near, he contrived, in the course of the three ensuing years, to do away with a great number of the worse features of presbyterial government, and even to get a moderate sort of Episcopacy established in the country. It is true, he did not succeed in these objects without many struggles and much opposition. Some of the ministers even contested every inch of ground with him. One day, in the assembly-room of the synod of Fife, when his measure for allowing a certain number of the ministers to vote in parliament was under discussion, David Ferguson, the oldest clergyman in the kingdom, irreverently compared it to the Trojan horse, and warned his brethren how they broke down the walls of their sanctuary to admit any such deceptious intruder. "Busk, busk, busk him," cried a still more fanciful orator, in allusion to the disguised form into which the measure was thrown, "busk him as bonily as ye can, and bring him in as fairly as ye will, we can still see him weel eneuch—we still see the horns of his mitre!" On another occasion, Andrew Melville, whose free remonstrances to the King are celebrated in Scottish history, appearing in a General Assembly, although he had been commanded by James to remain away, the King took him to task for his disobedience. But An-

drew, according to the report of his nephew James, [See his Diary,] discharged his conscience to the King '*after the auld manner*,'—that is to say, in the style of fervid invective peculiar to him—concluding by putting his hands round his neck, and saying, "Sir, tak you this head, and gar cut it aff, gif ye will; ye sall sooner get it then I betray the cause of Chryst." Yet these expressions of dissatisfaction were chiefly confined to those persons who had been in the habit of leading the church-courts, and who had greater occasion to lament the change, as it tended to abolish their power. When the whole church is taken into account, the north as well as the south, it is probable that the moderate Episcopacy introduced by the King was sincerely approved by the majority, as tending to produce better order, and prevent the whole power of the church from falling into the hands of a few persons, such as those who had lately all but possessed it.

Some historians, in detailing this part of James's life, have inveighed against him with great rancour, for having taking advantage of so slight a tumult as that of the 17th of December, in order to get the clergy humiliated. Allowing, however, that the tumult was slight—which it by no means appears to have been—James was surely as justifiable in making this use of it, as the clergy had been in taking advantage of his weakness all along, and of every accidental disturbance in the country, to procure the extension of their privileges. Those who acquire wealth by unfair means, have no reason to complain, when the individuals from whom it has been ravished, succeed, by similar methods, in getting it back.

The life of James, between 1596 and 1600, is marked by only one incident of note, the publication of his book of instructions to his eldest son, called *The Basilicon Doron*. He had scarcely been a father ere he set about the composition of this treatise. The uncertainty of his own life, which led him to fear that he should never have it in his power to communicate oral instruction to his son, was his chief reason for writing the work so many years before it could be applied to its ostensible use; and in order that it might be sure to reach its proper destination, he caused seven copies of it to be printed, each of which he deposited in the hands of some trusted officer. These persons were enjoined strict secrecy as to the existence of such a treatise, for it contained some explanations of the author's mind on matters of church government, which he did not wish to be divulged till his plans were a little better matured. Unfortunately, however, a gentleman whom he had employed to transcribe it for the press, showed the original to Mr Andrew Melville, who forthwith selected the passages unfavourable to the church, and, throwing them before the synod in Fife, spread a prodigious alarm amongst the clergy throughout Scotland. James, seeing that these isolated passages gave an impression which the whole was not calculated to convey, then saw fit to consent to the publication of the work, which accordingly took place in 1599.

The Basilicon Doron is by many degrees the most respectable of all James's prose compositions. It consists of three parts; one of which refers to religion, a second to the art of government, and a third to personal conduct. The whole is written in a

style which, however unsuitable to the taste of the present age, was then thought excellent, and may still be deemed good. In regard to matter and sentiment, it is entitled to even higher praise. James, according to unquestionable authority, was a good father. His bearing in that capacity was more manly and respectable than in any other. He accordingly displays, in his instructions to his son, a more solemn cast of thinking than in any other work; he blurts out fewer of those grotesque fancies which deform so many of the rest of his compositions; his whole mind seems to have been unconsciously elevated in the performance of this interesting duty. The book is a short one, because, according to his own explanation, it is difficult to get princes to read in youth, from the number of amusements which distract them, and equally difficult in mature age, from the perplexities of public business. As the whole book, however, is not more brief, than the individual sentiments are concise, it contains a prodigious quantity of matter. The profound and varied learning of the author is proved by a thick margin of authorities, partly from scripture, and partly from the classic writers.

Some passages of the Basilicon Doron are curious, as containing expositions of certain points in the King's character and history. We learn from one, that, in the earlier part of his reign, he was induced to pardon a great number of offenders, in the hope that his kindness would make them thenceforward good subjects, but that, in reality, he only brought the country into greater disorder by his clemency, and got no thanks from any one for his benevolent intentions. He tells us at another

place, that he ever found the persons who had taken his mother's part against himself in his minority, become, afterwards, his own best friends; an insinuation that he believed it possible to make the English Catholics good subjects. He also remarks, what is historically true, that all those who took a conspicuous part against his mother came to a wretched end.

There is great humanity, and much correct feeling, in the following directions: 'And, although the crime of oppression be not in this rank of unpardonable crimes, yet the over-common use of it in this nation, as if it were a virtue, especially by the greatest rank of subjects in the land, requireth the King to be a sharp censurer thereof. Be diligent, therefore, to try, and awful to bear down, the horns of proud oppressors: embrace the quarell of the poor and distressed, as your own particular, thinking it your greatest honour to oppress the oppressors: care for the pleasure of none; neither spare ye any pains in your own person, to see their wrongs redressed. Remember the honourable style given to my grandfather of worthy memory (James V.), in being called *the poor man's King*. And as the most part of a King's office standeth in deciding that question of *meum* and *tuum* among his subjects, so remember, when ye sit in judgment, that the throne ye sit on is God's, as Moses saith, and sway neither to the right hand nor to the left; either loving the rich, or pitying the poor. Justice should be blind and friendless: it is not on the judgment-seat ye should reward your friends, or seek to cross your enemies.'

He makes a curious observation regarding the Borders. There are two reasons, he says, for

giving no directions about their management. One is, that, if his son becomes sovereign of the whole island, 'according to God's right and his lineal descent,' then the Borders will be in the middle of his empire, and as easily ruled as any other part of it. If, on the other hand, he does not accede to that inheritance, then it is equally unnecessary to trouble him with directions, for he will, in that case, *never get leave to brook Scotland either—no, not his own head, whereon the crown should stand.* James feared, with great justice, that, if the Catholics succeeded in their aim of getting the Spanish Infanta to succeed Elizabeth, his present kingdom must also fall into the hands of that usurper: A notable reason for his leniency to the Catholic Lords, in opposition to the wishes of his subjects.

There is one passage in the Basilicon Doron, which excited no little remark at the time: it refers to the individuals whom the reader has seen arrayed in such violent opposition to the King in almost all the acts of his government—the leaders of the native clergy. On this subject, the royal author speaks with a degree of warmth and earnestness proportioned to the annoyance which he had received from those zealous defenders of the Presbyterian church-polity. There is also, in what he says, a candour and simplicity, an unhesitating expression of real feeling, which, though it can scarcely be expected to decrease the reverence borne by the Scottish people in general towards the fathers of their church, must yet have its effect upon the mind which simply endeavours to form a correct historical estimate of the motives of the two grand parties. 'In Scotland,' says the

royal author, 'the reformation of religion being extraordinarily wrought by God, and many things being inordinately done by a popular tumult and rebellion, of such as were blindly doing the work of God, but clogged with their own passions and particular respects, as well appeared by the destruction of our policy, and not proceeding from the prince's order, as it did in our neighbour country of England, as likewise in Denmark, and sundry parts of Germany; some fiery-spirited men in the ministry got such guiding of the people in that time of confusion, as, finding the guste of government sweet, they begouth to fantasie to themselves a democratic form of government; and, having by the iniquity of the time, been over-well baited in the wrack, first of my grandmother, and next of mine own mother, and after usurping the liberty of the time in my long minority, settled themselves so fast in that imagined democracy, as they fed themselves with the hope to become *tribuni plebis;* and so in a popular government to bear the sway of all the rule. And for this cause there never rose faction in the time of my minority, nor trouble sen-syne, but they that were upon that factious part were ever careful to persuade and allure these unruly spirits among the ministry, to spouse that quarrel as their own: where-through I was oft calumniated in their popular sermons, not for any evil or vice in me, but because I was a King, which they thought the highest evil. And because they were ashamed to profess this quarrel, they were busy to look narrowly in all my actions; and I warrant you a mote in my eye, yea a false report, was matter enough for them to work upon: and yet, for all their cunning, whereby they pre-

tended to distinguish the lawfulness of the office from the vice of the person, some of them would sometimes snapper out well grossly with the truth of their intentions, informing the people that all kings and princes were naturally enemies to the liberty of the church, and could never patiently bear the yoke of Christ: with such sound doctrine fed they their flocks. And because the learned, grave, and honest men of the ministry, were ever ashamed and offended with their temerity and presumption, pressing, by all good means, by their authority and example, to reduce them to a greater moderation, there could be no way found out so meet in their conceit as parity in the church: whereby the ignorants were emboldened (as bairdes) to cry the learned, godly, and modest, out of it: parity, the mother of confusion, and enemy to unity, which is the mother of order. For, if, by the example thereof, once established in the ecclesiastical government, the politick and civil estate should be drawn to the like, the great confusion that thereupon would arise may be easily discerned. Take heed, therefore, my son, to such Puritans, very pests in the church and common-wealth, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths or promises bind, breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason, and making their own imaginations, without any warrant of the word, the square of their consciences. I protest before the great God—and, since I am here as upon my testament, it is no place to lie in—that ye shall never find in any Hieland or Border thieves greater ingratitude, and moe lies and vile perjuries, than with these fanatick spirits. And suffer not the principals of them

to brooke your land, if ye like to sit at rest; *except ye would keep them for trying your patience, as Socrates did an evil wife.*'

He concludes this department of the subject, by recommending it to his son to establish, or continue the establishment of a moderate Episcopacy, as the only form of church-government which could consist with order among the clergy themselves, 'or the peace of a commonwealth and well-ruled monarchy.' . . . . . 'Cherish no man,' says he, 'more than a good pastor; hate no man more than a proud puritan.' . . . . . 'What is there,' he exclaims at another place, 'betwixt the pride of a glorious Nebuchadnezzar, and the preposterous humility of one of the proud Puritans, claiming to their parity, and crying, "We are all but vile worms," and yet will judge and give law to their King, but will be judged nor controuled by none? Surely there is more pride under such a one's black bonnet, than under Alexander the Great his diadem, as was said of Diogenes in the like case.'

Many amusing and many wise instructions occur in the third part of the work, which refers to personal conduct. He recommends frequent dining in public, and says, 'In the form of your meat-eating, be neither uncivil like a gross Cynic, nor affectedly mignarde like a dainty dame; but *eat in a manly, round, and honest fashion.*' He tells the prince, 'to take no heed of his dreams;' to wear his clothes 'in a careless, yet comely form;' to use, in common speech, 'no booke language, or pen and ink-horn terms;' and never to stake more in gaming than he would choose to cast among pages. Among a multitude of other advices, he insists, with a vehemence which goes far

to prove the purity of his own life, upon the virtue of continence, and, in a particular manner, implores his son, in the event of his marriage, to pay an inviolable regard to the nuptial vow. Every such transgression he esteems as a serious mischief to society, and also to the parties concerned, besides being, what few ever remember that it is, an infraction of the divine law. And, as a mere proof of the inexpediency of such vices, he instances the illegitimate children of his grandfather James V., one of whom (the Earl of Moray) 'bred the wrack of the lawful daughter and heir' of that monarch, while the child of another (the Earl of Bothwell) had been the pest of his own life for several years.

Such are a few of the more remarkable passages in the Basilicon Doron, selected rather with the view of affording historical light, or mere amusement to the reader, than with the hope of giving a favourable impression of the literary merit of the work. To claim in this age any approbation for King James as an author, may perhaps excite a smile. Yet, there is a good deal of truth in what Mr D'Israeli says regarding him, that he has more critics than readers. Johnson said of a dull novel by Congreve, that he would rather praise it than read it; but the public seems to have been animated by less benevolent reasons in regard to King James, and resolved rather to condemn than to peruse. It must at least be said, that, in his own age, before Bacon and Cowley had improved the national taste in English prose composition, the literary efforts of this monarch were among the very best extant. It is an historical fact, that this very Basilicon Doron communicated to the English people an impression of the author's abilities

and character, which was highly favourable to his views of becoming their sovereign. There is a degree of nervousness, precision, and smoothness in the style, which marks it as the production of a good intellect. Occasionally, too, there is play of fancy, that shows the wit and the poet. Piety is abundant; but it has the merit, rare in that age, of being a tranquil, rational sort of piety, the piety of a gentleman and a man of genius. In the Basilicon Doron, good sense, and a shrewd observation of life and its ways, are the predominant features. And, assuredly, it would be difficult to point out any code of morality in that age, or for a century and a half later, which is either purer in its sentiments, or more elegant in its diction. Indeed, but for the limited nature of its object—the instruction of a young prince—even at this day it might be put into the hands of youth, as a safe guide to virtue and happiness.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GOWRY CONSPIRACY.

1600.

AMIDST the tranquillity—for such it was, comparatively speaking—in which James spent the latter years of his residence in Scotland, there occurred a transaction, in which his dignity was more violently disturbed, and his life also more imminently threatened, than on any former occasion. This was the affair known by the epithet of the Gowry Conspiracy, which occurred at Perth, on the 5th of August 1600.

The reader will readily call to mind the Earl of Gowry, who was executed at Stirling in 1584, for his concern in the Raid of Ruthven. That nobleman left a large family, in which there were five sons. After the expulsion of the Earl of Arran in 1585, James did all that he could to compensate for a harsh measure which he could not formerly prevent, by restoring the title and estates to Gowry's eldest son, and taking all the younger members of the family immediately under his own protection. Two of the young ladies he placed in confidential stations under his consort; others he married to respectable noblemen—one, in par-

ticular, to his most favoured courtier, and the premier nobleman of Scotland, Ludovick Duke of Lennox.

The eldest son, dying in 1586, was succeeded by his next brother, John, a young man of talent, accomplishments, and the most prepossessing exterior, but who, it afterwards appeared, cherished passions which are not calculated to lead to happiness. This nobleman, when yet under age, was induced to engage in the intrigues of the Catholic nobles, mainly, it is supposed, through the influence of the Earl of Athole, who was married to one of his sisters. He afterwards went abroad, along with his younger brother Alexander, and completed his education at the famed university of Padua, where, among other branches of learning, he studied the pretended science of magic, for which Italy was then distinguished above all other countries. Returning in 1599, he was received by Elizabeth, as he passed through England, with marks of high distinction, allowed a retinue of guards, and in every respect treated as if he had been the Prince of Wales. Her Majesty's only reason for doing so was unquestionably to pique the King of Scots, Gowry being a remote pretender to the succession. This eclat, however, acting upon a mind naturally ambitious, and perhaps strengthening impressions which had been previously made upon it by the responses of Italian conjurors, seems to have inspired the young man with a most extravagant notion of his own destiny, and to have disposed him to a conspiracy against his native sovereign, to which the recollection of his father's fate was no doubt a strong additional incentive.

His reception in Scotland, where he arrived in May 1600, was of a nature calculated to confirm such a mind in its wildest schemes. The fame of his accomplishments, his handsome person, and of Elizabeth's kindness to him, preceded his arrival, and, being associated in the minds of the multitude with a recollection that his father was a sort of martyr in the cause of Prebyterianism and popular government, every where excited a lively interest in his favour. Like every other ambitious man, even while he listened with gratification to the applauses of the crowd, he secretly despised the flatterers; he remarked, as he made his way through the mob which received him at Edinburgh, "Pshaw, there were as many, I believe, to see my father's execution at Stirling." Still, these marks of popular favour must have tended to foment that very ambition which enabled him to despise them.

What precise form his views assumed, has not yet, and probably never will be discovered. Though he no doubt cherished some vague and indefinite design of revenging his father's death, it cannot be made to appear that he designed to murder the King. The more probable supposition is, that he intended an enterprise like that of his father and others at Ruthven, whereby, having secured the royal person, he might revolutionize the cabinet in favour of himself and friends. But the most extraordinary thing about this conspiracy, is, that he does not appear to have had, besides his own brother, more than one associate; and with that associate —the famous Logan of Restalrig—he was only on the point of making the concluding arrangements, when he and his brother, of themselves, and without the foreknowledge of a single servant, put the

plot into execution. We find that this feature in the transaction was entirely the result of a theory entertained by the young nobleman, regarding the best way of conducting a dangerous enterprise. William Rhind, his tutor, gave evidence afterwards, that, having several times conversed with the Earl on this subject in their walks, his lordship always professed, for his opinion, that 'he was not a wise man, that, having intended the execution of a high and dangerous purpose, communicates the same to any second person—because, keeping it to himself, he could never be discovered or disappointed.' That he should have attempted to seize the King, without any other assistance than that of his brother, and without having made any arrangements for the subsequent management of his prisoner, is only to be accounted for by allowing a great deal for the miscalculations of an extravagant mind, which was further deranged by assurances of supernatural assistance.

His associate, Logan, was a gentleman of ancient family and considerable landed property, the uterine brother of Lord Home. His chief estate was that of Restalrig near Edinburgh; but the family had recently become possessed, by marriage, of another on the coast of Berwickshire, which formerly belonged to a branch of the Homes. In the fortalice belonging to that newly acquired property, * perched on a lofty precipice, from the bottom of which the tide of the German ocean never recedes, Logan lived in baronial state, occasionally giving protection, in his unapproachable eyry, to

* Fastcastle, or Falsecastle, now a ruin—the Wolf's Crag, of the Author of Waverley.

such outlaws as Bothwell, despite of all the threats of King and council. In addition to dissolute character, irreligion, and other matters which are apt to dispose men to engage in hazardous enterprises, this baron seems to have had some personal grudge at the King, some unstaunched Scottish feud, which made him readily enter into Gowry's views. We learn this from some letters of his which have been preserved, in which he speaks of his prospects of revenge with the complacent feeling of one who expects presently to have a feast upon that terrible dainty. It is strange that, although four of these letters are addressed either to the Earl of Gowry, or to some *fourth* conspirator whose name is not known, very little is to be learned from them. Allusion is repeatedly made to a story of a gentleman of Padua, which Mr Alexander Ruthven had told him, and which he says is *a propos* to the design in hand—probably some dark tale of Italian vengeance. He talks with lively and self-gratulatory feeling of a dinner which he proposed to give to the person addressed, next year, in case of their enterprise being successful. He speaks with keen anxiety of a promise made by Gowry to give him, in the event of success, a present of the estate of Dirleton in East Lothian, (then his lordship's property;) from which it would appear, that he was in a great measure only an agent in the enterprise. To assure the person addressed of his resolution to go through with the plot, he describes his desire of revenge as so keen, that he would not be deterred from gratifying it although the scaffold were set up. But, further than these dark hints, the ultimate and chief object of the conspiracy—if it really had any such—receives very little illustration from these letters.

A little light, perhaps, is to be drawn from the conduct of the Earl during the brief interval which elapsed between the period of his arrival in the country and the denouement of the conspiracy. His deportment, in his occasional visits to court, was that of a man wrapt up in his own haughty thoughts, and who disregards all minor concerns in his anxiety respecting some important end. One day, in June, as he was entering what was called the *long gallery* of Holyroodhouse, for the purpose of visiting the King in his chamber of presence, which was situated at the extremity of that apartment, he perceived Colonel William Stewart, of the royal guards, enter it from the other end, having just left the King. As this officer had been active in seizing his father, he, from a natural repugnance, wished to avoid encountering him; and he therefore stepped aside, in order to permit Stewart to have free way along the gallery. A servant, however, taking a different view of the case, called out, "What, my lord! will you give back for any man here? Come forward, I pray you, boldly." Gowry then thought proper to resume his walk along the centre of the room; which being observed by Stewart, and construed into an insult, he stepped back into the King's chamber, and entered a violent complaint against the Earl. "Sir, will it please you," said he, "to listen to this strange matter? Here comes me in the Earl of Gowry, to boast and threaten all who have done service to your Highness. He proposes, I see, to begin with me. But, beware the best of you all!" The Earl entering the apartment at this moment, Stewart withdrew without saying any more. To the surprise of all present, Gowry paid no attention to the man or his complaints, but

conversed with the King about indifferent matters. Being afterwards asked the cause of this, he answered by quoting the significant proverb, "The Eagle catches no flies;" from which we are to argue, that his mind contemplated higher objects of revenge. It is surely justifiable, also, from Stewart's readiness in taking offence, and from his emphatic warning to the court, to suppose that he had good reason to suspect an explosion of wrath on the part of Gowry, against all who had been concerned in his father's death, the King himself not excepted.

In other respects, Gowry's conduct was such as to make a favourable impression on all around him. At Perth, where he was provost, or chief magistrate, and where he generally resided, the people regarded him with the greatest affection and respect. It is commonly affirmed, also, that he endeavoured, by sanctimoniousness of deportment, to gain the esteem of the clergy, a mode of attaining to public honours which has always been found both easy and successful in Scotland, and which might have been suggested to Gowry, if there had been no other example, by the history of the Regent Moray, for whom it gained everything but the crown. It also appears, from the evidence given by his intimates after the conspiracy, that he continued, during this interval, to study the occult science which he had learned at Padua, and was careful always to have about his person, a scroll of magical characters, which he believed to be possessed of some high influence over his fate.

It was on Monday, the 4th of August, that he made his first known movement towards the performance of the plot. After supper that evening, being in company only with his brother and An-

drew Henderson, his chamberlain, he asked this official what he intended to do next day. Henderson, who seems to have been a simple-hearted man, answered, that he thought of riding to his lordship's estate of Ruthven, some miles off, in order to confer upon some matters of business with the tenants. The Earl said, "Stay that journey; you must ride to-morrow to Falkland, with my brother and Andrew Ruthven: see that you be ready at four in the morning; and, if my brother directs you back to me, with a message, or letter, make all the haste you can." Accordingly, Mr Alexander left Perth next morning early, accompanied by Henderson and Andrew Ruthven, and made the best of his way to Falkland, where he arrived a little after six o'clock, the distance being about a two hours ride.

King James was at this time residing at his favourite palace of Falkland, * for the sport of buck-hunting, of which he was very fond; and, as the morning of the 5th of August happened to be seasonable for this recreation, he had already breakfasted, and was on the point of mounting his horse. Young Ruthven sent out Andrew Henderson from his lodging, to ascertain the King's motions, and soon after learned, that his Majesty was walking through the Palace Square, in his boots, towards the stables, which stood, as their ruins still stand, at the distance of three or four hundred yards from the house. Having made up to the King

* In consideration of this place having been James's favourite Scottish residence, a view of it has been selected to adorn the front of the present volume. We are indebted for the design, to Mr Brown's beautiful and interesting publication of the Royal Palaces of Scotland.

at that place, Ruthven bowed to the extraordinary depth of his Majesty's knee, and addressed him with a countenance which bore unusual marks of reverence. Then drawing him a little aside, he began, with eyes bent upon the earth, to relate an adventure of a singular kind, which he said had befallen him on the preceding night. In taking a walk through the fields near Perth, he had encountered a man of mean appearance, whose person was unknown to him, and who wore a cloak wrapt carefully over the lower part of his face, as if for the purpose of concealment. His curiosity being excited regarding this person, he asked his name, and how he came to be wandering in so solitary a place; when the stranger, by faltering in his speech, and other marks of confusion, excited such suspicions in his mind, that he thought it necessary to examine him farther. Observing that he appeared to carry something under his cloak, he cast by the laps of that garment, and discovered a large pot full of broad gold pieces, which the man bore with difficulty under his arm. He immediately judged it necessary to take the fellow into custody, till he should give an explanation of his business. He brought him to a private place in his brother's mansion, locked several doors upon him, and, believing it to be his duty to make the King his first confidant in the transaction, he had come thus early to Falkland to impart the secret, with which even his own brother was not as yet acquainted.

According to the King's own account of this conference—the only one extant—his first answer, after thanking the Master of Gowry for his good-will, was, that he could not properly interfere in

such a matter, as the treasure of no free subject could by law belong to him, except it were found under the earth. "Well," said Ruthven, "the fellow confessed to me that he was going to hide it under ground;—only, I had no leisure to inquire very particularly." To this ingenious afterthought James replied, that an intention was very different from a deed, and that he could not yet see what right he had to meddle in such a matter. Ruthven, put out of his fence a second time, observed pettishly, that he thought his Majesty over scrupulous in a matter which promised so much profit to him; and that, if he persisted in refusing, some others—as his brother, for instance—might meddle with it, and "make his Majesty the more ado." James, then suspecting that the man was some practising Papist, who had come to Scotland with money to stir up a new Catholic rebellion, inquired if Ruthven could recollect the species of the coin, and what sort of a fellow he was that carried it. Here the conspirator's ingenuity was again conspicuous. He answered, that the coin seemed foreign, and that, although the man appeared a native of Scotland, yet he could not recollect to have ever seen him before. James still hesitated: he would send a warrant, he said, to the magistrates of Perth, to receive the man from the Master's hands, and subject him to a thorough examination. Ruthven, however, remonstrated vehemently against this proposal. If either his brother, he said, or the bailies got their fingers on the gold, his Majesty would get but a poor account of it; it was only for the purpose of making the King the first meddler in this business, that he had taken all this trouble to apprise him of it.

And he eagerly requested that his Majesty would ride with him in a private manner to Perth, and take cognizance of the man and his precious load.

James was still irresolute. Surprised alike at the strangeness of the tale, and at the confused manner of the reciter, he could not decide what course he should pursue. He found his mind, perhaps, in that obnubilated state, which we generally experience when told any thing very much out of the common way, or of which we cannot well make the different facts tally. In such a mist, the mind becomes in a certain degree insensible to danger which it would otherwise suspect, because all those powers are engaged in unriddling the mystery which should properly be employed in the more important duty of circumspection.

Before the King could make any decision, his attendants had all got on horseback, the game was found, and the huntsmen were ready to do their duty; so he was obliged to break away from the Master, with a promise that he should give a resolute answer when the chase was concluded. Ruthven expressed great vexation at the delay, observing, that there was not such a hunting to be got every day as that which he had purposed to his Majesty.

The King had not been long on the fields, before the tale of the treasure came again into his mind, to the exclusion of all enjoyment of his favourite recreation. The curiosity which he had resisted before, now overpowered his better sense, and he formed the resolution to accompany young Ruthven to Perth. Sending a messenger to bring the Master, he informed him of this determination, and promised to carry it into effect so

soon as the chase should be ended. Ruthven then, as concerted the night before, desired Henderson to ride to Perth with all possible speed, and inform the Earl his brother that the King was to be with him incontinent, and that a dinner should be prepared. This, of course, he kept concealed from the King, being directly contrary to all that he had told his Majesty regarding the propriety of going alone, and without the Earl's knowledge. He followed James through all the windings of the chase which ensued, taking every opportunity he could get to urge him to quit the hunt, that he might ride to Perth.

About eleven o'clock, after a very hard chase of four hours, the buck was brought down about the distance of two arrow-flights from the royal stables, and the Master of Ruthven proceeded to entreat the King, in more earnest language than ever, to make haste with him towards Perth. It was James's usual practice to superintend the *curry* or dissection of the deer; but on the present occasion, he was prevailed on by Ruthven to remit that duty. Without even waiting for a fresh horse, or till his sword could be brought, or till the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Mar, and other courtiers, could change their horses in order to attend him, he was induced, by the solicitations of this strange youth, to set off instantly on a long ride; only observing to his train, that he was going on a hurried visit to Perth, and should be back before the evening.

The first idea that occurred to the courtiers, when they saw the King go away in this abrupt manner, was, that he intended to institute proceedings against the Master of Oliphant, who had lately disturbed the public peace in the district of

Angus; and they instantly exerted themselves to get fresh horses, that they might be enabled to accompany him. Some were so expeditious in this duty, as to overtake the King within the first few miles. Within one mile he was overtaken by a fresh horse, which his servants had sent after him. Being thus better mounted than Ruthven, whose horse was much jaded by the chase, he was easily able to outstrip him in speed; yet, to his surprise, that young man continued as eager and importunate in his entreaties to him to make haste, as if he had been worse mounted, or disposed to ride at a slower pace. This circumstance, joined to the extraordinary deportment of the young man, his wild staring with his eyes, his occasional deep thoughtfulness, and the great anxiety he betrayed to prevent the courtiers from following, led the King to suspect that his wits were wandering. The first man who came up happened to be the Duke of Lennox, who was married to one of Ruthven's sisters. James, taking this nobleman aside, said to him, "You could not guess what errand I am riding for! I am going to Perth to get a *pose* [a concealed treasure]. Mr Alexander Ruthven has informed me that he has found a man that has a pitcher full of coined gold of great sorts." And he asked the Duke, "What humour he thought Mr Alexander to be of?" Lennox answered, that he knew nothing else of him, "than that he was an honest discreet young man." James then related to the Duke all the particulars of Ruthven's pretended adventure; to which the Duke replied, "Sir, I like not that; it is not likely." Nevertheless, the King went on. When the party had come within a mile of Perth

Mr Alexander requested permission to ride on before, in order to make some preparations for his Majesty's arrival; to which his Majesty consented.

Henderson, who was dispatched to Perth at the beginning of the hunt, had arrived at ten o'clock, and immediately proceeded to deliver his message to the Earl of Gowry. At his entrance, Gowry was engaged in conversation with three gentlemen, who were paying him a morning visit; but he instantly withdrew to another room, and eagerly inquired if Henderson had brought a letter from his brother. "I have no letter," said Henderson. "What answer, then, have you brought?" "I was desired to inform your lordship," answered the chamberlain, "that the King's Majesty would be here incontinent, and that you must prepare his dinner." The Earl asked how the King seemed to have taken with his brother. "He was weel tane with," answered the messenger; "when he made his courtesy, the King laid his hand upon his shoulder." Henderson then retired to his own house, and changed his travelling for his customary dress; after which, returning to Gowry House, the Earl requested him to put on his *secret* [concealed defensive armour], and plate sleeves, as he "had a Highlandman to tak in the Shoegate," (the street in which the house was situated). The man did as he was bid, and afterwards assisted in taking up the Earl's dinner.

Gowry had that day excused himself from attending a meeting of the town-council, on the pretext of having business of his own; and, apparently, that he might the better appear the surprised host which the King was to expect him to be, he entertained at dinner three friends, different

from those formerly mentioned, who had happened to wait upon him. As he was sitting at table with these gentlemen, Andrew Ruthven, who had accompanied Mr Alexander and Andrew Henderson to Falkland, came in and whispered into his ear an announcement that the King was on the way. Soon after Mr Alexander himself came in, and proclaimed the fact of his Majesty's approach to the town; on which all rose from the table, and the Earl hastily prepared to go out to meet the King. The meeting took place on the South Inch, a common immediately without the town walls. The King, with his retinue of about fourteen persons, was then brought into Gowry House, attended by the Earl, and nearly a hundred of his friends and fellow-townsmen, who had turned out to welcome his Majesty.

The house into which James was thus conducted, was a huge edifice, which cannot be described better, without the assistance of a sister art, than by stating that it was in the shape of the letter L, having its shorter division parallel with the river Tay, and a garden extending behind the longer division, while a square, or, as it was then called, *a close*, was formed in front by a wall starting from the various extreme corners of the building, and meeting in an angle, where there was a gate. It was a house of three *flats* or storeys, the lower being occupied by cellars and menial apartments, the second by a dining-room and hall, and the third chiefly by a long picture-gallery. The principal access to the various stories was by a spiral stair, called in Scotland a *turnpike*, which was situated in the angle of the building. But there was another and smaller stair,

noted in the subsequent narrative as the *Black Turnpike*, which ascended near the upper extremity of the longer stroke of the L, giving admission to a chamber on the third floor, at the end of the picture-gallery. It is necessary that the reader should make himself acquainted with these minutiæ, in order to understand what follows.

The Earl's reception of James was precisely such as he might have expected from a person whose house is honoured with the unexpected arrival of a too numerous and too dignified company of guests. His Lordship was polite, but confused; greatly anxious, it appeared, to do the necessary honours to his sovereign, yet embarrassed to the last degree regarding his proper entertainment. He was even worse provided than usual. His principal household servant was sick. The viands prepared for his own dinner and that of his friends, were half eaten, and entirely out of season. The King, though very hungry from the effects of six hours hard riding, was obliged to wait a whole hour before any food could be set before him. During the interval, his Majesty took an opportunity of asking the Master in a whisper, if they might not now go to examine the man and his pot of gold. But Alexander told him that it would be better to wait till after dinner; and in the meantime, he entreated the King not to seem too familiar with him, lest it should appear strange to the Earl. James then addressed himself to Gowry, for the purpose of whiling away the time; but he was surprised to find that there was no possibility of engaging that person in any thing like conversation, his whole discourse consisting of 'half words and imperfect sentences.'

'His Majesty being set down to his dinner, the Earl stood very pensive, and with a dejected countenance, at th' end of his Majesties table, oft rounding (*whispering*) over his shoulder, one while to one of his servants, and another while to another; and oft times went out and in to the chamber.' * When the King had almost dined, his host conducted the courtiers into the adjoining hall, and saw them set down to meat; but, instead of taking his own proper place at the board, he immediately returned, and resumed his silent and stupified attitude at the bottom of the King's table. Just as James concluded his dinner, Mr Alexander whispered into his ear, that, as the courtiers were now all engaged, the present would be an excellent opportunity for stepping away by themselves to see the treasure, if his Majesty could only shake off the Earl. At Ruthven's suggestion, James rose from table, and, addressing Gowry in a homely mannner, desired him to carry his cup into the hall, and act as his proxy, in drinking the healths of the guests. Alexander Ruthven then led the King forth from the chamber into the hall, where the royal attendants were taking their dinner; crossed that room obliquely, towards the door by which it was entered from the main staircase; ascended that staircase to the next floor above; and entered the picture-gallery. While James advanced up the stair, Ruthven looked back into the hall, and intimated, as his Majesty's command, that none should follow. After entering the picture-gallery, Ruthven locked the door carefully, muttering half aloud, "We'll make very

* The King's Narrative, apud Pitcairn's Trials.

sure of him," by way of excuse for a precaution which might have otherwise raised suspicions in the royal mind. He was now remarked by the King to assume a smiling and pleased look, which he had not exhibited at any former period of the day. It should be specified, that the conspirator had a sword by his side, while James had nothing but a hunting-horn, which, in the hurry of that busy morning, he had never found an opportunity of laying aside.

At the end of the picture-gallery was a square chamber, already mentioned as having a separate communication with the court-yard, or *close*, by means of the *Black Turnpike*. Into this chamber Ruthven now led the King, locking the door behind him, as he had done that of the gallery, and muttering the same excuse. In the corner of the room, was a door opening into a small chamber, or study, which was contained in a turret projecting from the main building. Ruthven ushered the King through the chamber into the study, the door of which he immediately locked, as he had done all the rest.

Here the King observed, instead of the bound treasure-keeper he had been led to expect, a man not only free, but having both defensive and offensive arms, being no other than Andrew Henderson the chamberlain, who, but half an hour before, had been thrust into this room by Alexander Ruthven, and the door locked upon him, without any intimation made as to the purpose for which he was to keep that strange post. The Master now suddenly changed his smiling demeanour for a ferocious frown; clapped his hat upon his head, as if to signify that all respect for the royal per-

son was at an end; and presenting a dagger, which he snatched from Henderson's girdle, at the King's breast, exclaimed, "Sir, you must be my prisoner; remember of my father's death?" James was, of course, greatly alarmed at this violence. Yet, though it is generally supposed that the sight of a drawn weapon was sufficient to deprive him of his senses, he by no means lost his presence of mind. He was beginning to utter some remonstrance against Ruthven's conduct, when that youth fiercely exclaimed, "Hold your tongue, sir, or, by Christ, you shall die!" There is some discrepancy in the evidence regarding Mr Alexander's behaviour at this point of the story. Henderson at first represented him as having appeared so determined to kill the King, that, if he had been permitted to hold the dagger as much longer as a man might walk but six steps, he would, for certain, have struck his Majesty to the hilts with it. The same witness afterwards gave a softer account of his appearance; and, in all probability, as the King's imprisonment and not his death, seems to have been the first object of the conspirators, if not the whole extent of their intentions, the second account was the more correct of the two. Be that as it may, Henderson completely disappointed the expectations of his masters; for, instead of assisting Ruthven in his task of intimidating and binding the King, as nine Scottish servants out of ten would have done in that age, he wrested the weapon out of the hand which pointed it to the King's breast, and vehemently entreated young Ruthven to desist from so cruel and so dangerous an enterprise. The King, then relieved from the fear of instant assassination, proceed-

ed to expostulate with the conspirator. "Maister Alexander," said he, in his usual broad Scotch, "you and I were always very great (*friendly*); touching your father's death, man, I was but ane minor at the time it happened; my council might then have done ony thing they pleased. Further, man, albeit ye deprive me of my life, ye will never be King of Scotland; for I have baith sons and dochters. And there are men in this town, and other friends, who will not leave it unrevenged." Ruthven, somewhat mollified, swore a great oath that it was not his Majesty's life that he craved. "What reck, then," said the King, "although ye tak off your hat?" Ruthven uncovered himself, and his Majesty proceeded to say, "What is it ye crave, man, an ye crave not my life?" Ruthven replied, "Sir, it is but ane promise." "What promise?" inquired James. "Sir," said Ruthven, "my brother the Earl will tell you." The King desiring him to bring that person, Mr Alexander exacted a promise from his Majesty, upon oath, that he should not open the windows or cry out, while he was absent, and then left the room, locking the door behind him. Immediately after he was gone, James entered into conversation with Henderson, who all this time had exemplified, by his conduct, how unfit he was for the part which the brothers had designed him to act. "How cam ye in here, man?" said the King. "As God leives," answered the unfortunate chamberlain, "I was shot in like ane dog." "Do you think my lord of Gowry will do me any evil, man?" inquired the King. The man answered, "I vow to God, sir, I shall die first." James, then revolving his situation, conceived that, although he had promised not

to open any window himself, he might command this wretched minion to do so for him. On being requested to perform this service, Henderson opened one of the two small windows by which the turret was lighted—not that which looked towards the court-yard, whence assistance was to be expected, but the opposite casement, which had its aspect towards the public street. "Fy," cried the King, "the wrong window, man!" Henderson, instantly perceiving his mistake, crossed towards the opposite window; but, before he reached it, Alexander Ruthven again burst into the apartment, exclaiming, "By God, Sir, there is nae remeid!" after which he sprung at the King, seized his hands, and began to bind them with a garter, which he had brought with him.

In the mean time, the elder brother was playing his own part in the conspiracy. After the King and Alexander had passed through the dining-hall, his lordship asked the guests to step with him into the garden, and take an additional dessert from his cherry-trees. Opening a side-door in the hall, he led the way, by an outer stair, into the garden behind the house. They had not been long there, however, when one of the domestics came to them hastily, and informed his master, that the King had just ridden away to Falkland, and was already through the South Inch. The courtiers, accustomed to such practical jokes on the part of his Majesty, betrayed no surprise at the information, but rushed through the house into the exterior court-yard, crying for their horses, and expressing the greatest anxiety to be gone. Among all of them, none cried with more vehemence or vociferation than the Earl of Gowry, who no doubt

wished to increase the impatience of his guests to quit the house. A servant informing him that his horse was at Scone, and of course beyond reach, he affected not to hear, and still continued his cry of "Horse! Horse!" At length, on coming to the outer gate, the Duke of Lennox asked the porter, if his Majesty had gone forth. The man answering in the negative, Gowry sternly told him he lied, and proposed to go back to the house to ascertain the fact. He ran up the principal staircase, as if for that purpose, but in reality, it is supposed, to hold a conference with his brother, for that person's retirement from the turret corresponded in point of time with the Earl's going up into the house. Soon returning to the court-yard, he informed the courtiers that the King had really left the house, having gone by the back-gate. "That cannot be, my lord," said the pertinacious porter, "for I have the key of the back-gate, and of all the gates of the place." Puzzled by this contradictory intelligence, the King's attendants rushed out to the street, and went hither and thither in all directions to acquire information. At that moment, a cry was heard—a cry so shrill and piercing, and so completely betokening the extremity of mortal fear, that the hearers many days afterwards declared, that they should never forget it. The Duke of Lennox said to the Earl of Mar, "That is the King's voice, be he where he will himself!" Presently after, as they gazed inquiringly up to the walls of the building whence the sound seemed to have proceeded, they saw the King's elbow and head partially projected from the window of the little turret which overhung the street, the head uncovered, the cheeks red, and a

hand grasping the mouth, as if to prevent utterance, while the voice exclaimed, with difficult articulation, but the same tone of extreme distress and terror, "I am murdered! Treason, treason! My Lord of Mar, help!" But it is here necessary to revert to the proceedings of Alexander Ruthven, in the turret.

When that person entered the turret the second time, and made an attempt to bind his victim, James appears to have understood, from his actions and language, that there was nothing to be expected but instant death. Under such distressing circumstances, it might have been expected that his Majesty, who neither possessed much courage, nor much strength, would have at once sunk under the efforts of the supposed assassin. On the contrary, he acquired at once magnanimity and physical force from the emergency. Exclaiming that he was born a free King, and would die a free King, he wrenched his hands loose from the gripe of the conspirator, and sprung once more free upon the floor. Henderson, at the same time, snatched away the garter. Ruthven lost no time in again springing upon the King. Seizing his Majesty by the throat with one hand, he thrust the other into his mouth, to prevent him from crying. In the violence of this action, he pressed James's shoulders against the wall, close by the half opened window. While they were in that attitude, Henderson put his hand over the King's left shoulder, and drew up the moveable wooden board, which, according to an almost universal practice in Scotland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, constituted the lower part of the casement. James then shifted his position in such a

way, as to cause his face to be visible through the opening to a group of his attendants on the public street below, among whom he recognised his school-fellow and friend the Earl of Mar. At that moment, Henderson drawing Ruthven's hand off the King's mouth, he was enabled to utter those cries for succour which have just been particularized.

Lennox and Mar, who first observed the King's face at the window, had but little time to speculate upon his extraordinary circumstances; for, as appeared to them, he was almost immediately dragged back into the chamber by the person with whom he seemed to be struggling. The two noblemen instantly rushed in at the gate, crossed the court-yard diagonally towards the main staircase, ascended that stair till they reached the floor in which they observed the King, and, entering the gallery, which was now open,* endeavoured to force open the door of the chamber at its upper extremity, which, however, resisted all their efforts, although they used a ladder, which they found in the room, as a battering-ram against it. Fortunately, while they were thus put *hors-de-combat*, some other friends of the King took a different and patent way towards the scene of strife. The first man to reach that scene was a page of the name of John Ramsay, an undistinguished youth of three-and-twenty, who, on rising from

* The circumstance of the gallery-door, which was locked by Alexander Ruthven, being open, when Lennox and Mar went up to the King's rescue, seems to prove, that the Master came out to the staircase, or else admitted his brother into the gallery, for the purpose of having a conference with him, during the time of his absence from the turret.

his dinner in the hall, had been intrusted by a servant with the keeping of a hawk, which had that day been presented to the King, and who, at this moment, carried the bird fastened upon his left hand. Ramsay had the good fortune, in his attempt to reach the King, to select the Black Turnpike as what appeared the nearest way. It is said that that access was usually shut up as obsolete, but was, on the present occasion, open, apparently for the use of the conspirators.

After James had uttered his cry for help at the window, his struggles with Ruthven assumed a much more desperate character. The Master, then casting a reproachful look at the domestic whom he had expected to assist him, said, "Woe worth thee! Thou wilt cause us all die!" Trembling with excessive rage, he put his right hand upon his sword, designing, as we are to suppose, to draw it, and dispatch the King. But James, whose strength rose with his danger, as that of Ruthven declined with his agitation, put his hand so firmly upon the hilt of the weapon, that the young man was unable to unsheath it. At this moment, Henderson went into the chamber, and, finding the key in the door which opened upon the Black Turnpike, turned it about, and opened the door, for the double purpose, according to his declaration, of making his own escape, and letting in the King's servants. The struggles of Ruthven and the King, meanwhile, increased in violence. Clasped in each other's arms, each striving alike between life and death, they tottered forth from the closet into the chamber, whither Henderson had gone before them. After wrestling a little there, James was fortunately enabled, by the

strength which despair had lent him, to force down his antagonist upon his knees, and to catch his head under his arm. They were in that situation —Ruthven's head pressed under his Majesty's left armpit, and his hand thrust upwards against the King's face—when John Ramsay, who, as already mentioned, endeavoured to seek the King by ascending the Black Turnpike, pushed up the door, and entered the apartment.

James was at first unable, either from breathlessness or the pressure of Ruthven's hand, to give his page any directions. The young man, however, could easily perceive that his proper duty was to release the King, by whatever means, from the hands of the Master of Gowry. Stopping but a moment to cast the hawk from his hand, he drew the whinyard, or short sword, which he wore as part of his hunting-dress, and, making a half circuit round the parties, attempted, with proper respect for the royal person, to inflict a stab on Ruthven. James at that moment mumbled forth, "Strike him low—he has on a doublet of proof;" a fact which he had ascertained in the struggle. But Ramsay appears to have only succeeded in wounding the conspirator on the face and neck. He did enough, however, to cause the Master to relax the hold he had upon the King, who was now able to thrust him out of the apartment, and down the stair.

The rescue so far effected, Ramsay went to a window, or slip in the staircase, and, seeing Sir Thomas Erskine in the court-yard, cried to him, "Ey, Sir Thomas, come up this turn-pike—up to the head of it." The person so called upon entered the staircase accordingly, followed by Hugh

Herries, the King's physician, and George Wilson, a servant. As he was ascending, he met Alexander Ruthven, who was staggering downwards with a bloody face and neck. Instantly apprehending that this was the traitor, he called upon his followers to strike him, having himself no weapon; and Hugh Herries accordingly gave the wounded man a mortal blow, which caused him to fall at the bottom of the stair, where he almost instantly expired. As he turned in the death-agony, he muttered, "Alas! I had not the wyte of it;" an expression which was afterwards harped upon by those who disbelieved in the reality of this conspiracy, as evidence against the King, but which certainly denotes no more than that the young man was led into the plot by the influence of his elder brother's more powerful and ambitious mind.

The King was not yet by any means fully rescued. When the Earl of Gowry heard the King's voice proceeding from the window, he affected to be in great surprise at the effect which it had upon Lennox, Mar, and others, and repeatedly asked them what they meant, as if he himself had not heard the sounds which occasioned their wonder. Sir Thomas Erskine, however, penetrated his thoughts, and, seizing him by the collar, exclaimed, "Traitor, this is thy deed!" Gowry asseverated that he knew not of the matter; but Erskine disregarded his words, and dashed him to the earth, where, if we may believe his own declaration, he would have stabbed him, if he had happened to have his dagger about him. The Earl's

retainers soon released their master from the grips of Sir Thomas, who then made haste, as already mentioned, to ascend the turnpike to the King. It was this rencounter with Gowry which prevented him from rushing at the very first, with Lennox and Mar, up the main staircase; which if he had done, be it remarked, Alexander Ruthven would not have been killed in the way described, nor would the King have had the valuable assistance of Erskine and Herries, in protecting him from a danger, the greatest which had as yet befallen him.

Gowry, on arising from the ground where Erskine had laid him, drew two swords which he wore in one scabbard, and, with one in each hand, after the Italian fashion, rushed through the crowd, exclaiming, that "he would either be in his own house, or die by the way!" Some person unknown put a steel bonnet on his head, as he was entering the court-yard. Thus armed and defended, he crossed the court, towards the door of the Black Turnpike, preceded and followed by about seven of his principal retainers. Thomas Cranstoun, who went before him, pointed out the corpse of Alexander Ruthven, which was lying with the face downwards at the bottom of the stair. But Gowry was too intent upon active exertion, to linger a moment even over the body of a slain brother. "Up the stair!" was the brief but significant answer he gave to Cranstoun's remark. The domestic accordingly proceeded; and the Earl went after, with the rest of his servants, exclaiming, all the way, that he would put his weapons through the first man he met.

The King, whose friends were only four in num-

her—for Henderson had slipped away immediately after Ruthven was dispatched—was greatly alarmed when he perceived this large party of enemies about to enter the room. His courage, however, such as it was, did not forsake him. Believing that Alexander Ruthven had dropped his sword amongst the rushes which were strewed over the apartment, he commenced a search for it, intending to use it against the Earl and his servants, as he had no weapon of his own. By a more fortunate resolution, his friends thought it would be best for both himself and them, as well as for the country, that he should retire from the scene of strife; and they accordingly thrust him hastily into the round closet within the turret. Just as they did so, Gowry entered with his retinue, and began to fight.

This battle was unequal, to the extent of two to one; and what gave the assailants still greater advantage, Gowry was a most dexterous adept in the use of the double sword; while Herries, one of the King's party, was embarrassed in his evolutions by a club-foot. It was with the greatest difficulty, at first, that the weaker party could defend themselves. Fortunately, however, Gowry's servants, though disposed to fight for their master as a matter of course, were awed and dashed considerably by the reflection that, in the present case, they might commit high treason as well as murder slaughter; and accordingly, they did not *buckle* (to use the favourite phrase of the time) with that energy which was displayed by the opposite and more desperate party. For some time, wounds were given and taken on both sides. At length, Ramsay used an expression which did more for

him than ten swords could have done. "What matters it," said he, "to fight *now*, since our dear master is slaughtered!" At this, the Earl of Gowry dropped the points of his swords upon the floor, confounded, as it would appear, at the idea of such a catastrophe, where he had contemplated something so much more innocent. Ramsay took that opportunity to run him through the body; and the unfortunate nobleman dropped on the floor without saying a single word. His servants then fled down the turnpike, leaving the King's friends in possession of the bloody chamber.

During all the time of this fray, the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar had been beating violently at the door which communicated betwixt the gallery and the chamber; giving thereby an additional shade of horror to the scene, as at first the royal party supposed them to be another company of Gowry's servants, bent on rescuing their master, or engaged on some other division of the conspiracy. It being now ascertained who they were, means were taken to open the door, and admit the two noblemen, who, as might be expected, expressed no small surprise at finding the Earl of Gowry, whom they had just parted with on the street, lying dead at his Majesty's feet. James, now assured that the worst of the danger was over, piously knelt down upon the floor, and, with all his friends in the same attitude around him, returned fervent thanks, "out of his own mouth, for that miraculous deliverance and victory; assuring himself," as he tells us in his narrative of the affair, "that God had preserved him from so desperate a perill, for the perfiting of some greater work behind, to his glorie, and for procur-

ing by him the wiel of his people, that God had committed to his charge." Either before or after this devout action, seeing his hawk flutter wildly through the apartment, he set his foot upon her leash, and caused her to be taken in charge by her former keeper.

Another danger yet remained. The people of Perth, on hearing of the fray at Gowry House, had assembled at the sound of an alarm-bell, and, being prepossessed in the highest degree in favour of their youthful provost, they could not at first believe that he was the aggressor or conspirator, but were convinced that, on the contrary, the whole affair was a plot against him and his brother, on the part of the King and courtiers. When it is recollected that Gowry's servants were equally ignorant of the real nature of the conspiracy, and that they were even more zealously disposed than the citizens to revenge their master's death, it must be evident that James, with little more than a dozen servants in the town, and only the half of these in immediate attendance, was still in very perilous circumstances. From the windows of the little turret, he could at this moment hear the most dreadful threats directed against himself by the people below. Some were crying, "Woe befall the bloody butchers, that have murdered these innocents!" Others, addressing their fellow-townsmen, cried, "Ye are not gude neighbours that help not your provost!" One woman openly threatened, that the green coats of the King and his courtiers should yet make atonement for this butchery; and a gentleman of Gowry's name and family was heard to cry for a beam to break open the door of the vaults, and gunpowder to blow up

the house. A great number of Gowry's servants, mingled with the citizens, rushed up the Black Turnpike; and, if the royal party had not taken the precaution to shut and lock the door, would have burst into the room, and probably put an end to the King's life. As it was, they testified their hostile intentions by thrusting pikes and swords through the small square aperture, which, according to an old custom in Scotland, still common in the dwellings of the common people, was left in the lower corner of the door. By one of these weapons a gentleman was wounded in the leg.

Fortunately, the magistrates of the town took a different view of the causes of this tumult from what the mob were now acting upon. Partly from the feeling of their office, which naturally led them to side with dignitaries, and partly, perhaps, from their habit of quelling all mobs, however originated, these gentlemen conceived it their duty to exert themselves in pacifying, rather than inflaming the passions which possessed the multitude. Having succeeded so far in doing so, they approached the house, and signified a wish to see the King, and hear his own account of the matter. James then appeared at a window, and gave them a short explanation of what had taken place, and of his present circumstances. The crowd was then withdrawn from the Black Turnpike, and a meeting effected between the municipal authorities and their imprisoned sovereign.

It is one of the most curious subordinate facts connected with the Gowry conspiracy, that the news of this popular tumult travelled in an amazingly brief space of time to Dundee, a town upwards of twenty English miles distant; the inha-

bitants of which, guessing that Perth would be given up to pillage for the treasonous conduct of its citizens, came up in a body, before the evening was far spent, bearing arms in their hands, wherewith to fit themselves for the duty of spoliation. It was in consequence of an ancient dispute between the two towns for burgal precedency, which had lately been conducted with an unexampled degree of asperity, that the people of Dundee were moved to take this precipitate step. We may therefore suppose that, when they arrived at Perth, and found every thing quiet, the triumph of the inhabitants of that town would be as great in ridicule, as that of the inhabitants of Dundee was expected to be in a somewhat more substantial sort of harvest.

Assured of the protection of the magistrates, James now descended to the lower and better apartments of the house. But before doing so, he committed the bodies of the two slain brothers to the hands of these dignitaries, to be kept till they should be examined by the law authorities, and treated in the manner usual in cases of high treason. It was then remarked, with the superstition of that age, that, on Gowry's girdle being removed (in which part of his dress he had concealed the magical scroll already mentioned), the blood for the first time began to flow from his wound. Of course, the true cause of that apparent phenomenon, was the motion of the body occasioned in removing the girdle.

James left the town at eight o'clock, thinking it better to brave the terrors of a somewhat stormy night, than to remain longer amidst a people from whose excited passions he had such inde-

quate means of defending himself. As he rode towards Falkland, he found, notwithstanding the darkness and the storm, the road every where crowded with the inhabitants of the adjacent districts, who had already heard obscure reports of his danger, and now flocked to ascertain that he was safe. The congratulations which these people poured upon him, the very circumstance of their assembling in such a way, prove that, by the nation at large, exclusive of some of the clergy, he was regarded with feelings of warm affection. After a singularly busy and eventful day, he returned, late in the evening, to the bosom of his family at Falkland, from which he had set out that morning with so little expectation of extraordinary adventures. Happily, the transactions of the day brought no mischief to his consort, who, at this time, was six months pregnant with the child, afterwards Charles I.

He next morning conceived it to be necessary to acquaint the inhabitants of Edinburgh with the event, through the medium of his Privy Council. At first, when little was known besides that the King had been delivered from an imminent danger, the news was received with expressions of satisfaction such as could not but be agreeable to the King. Elsewhere, the popular feeling was precisely the same: at Aberdeen, the magistrates went through the streets *singing psalms of rejoicing*. But, when the particulars of the strange tale reached the public ear, doubts and suspicions began to take place of these expressions of loyalty. The whole affair was so strange and improbable—the story told by Alexander Ruthven to the King—the non-appearance of any associates in the ear-

spiracy—the behaviour of the servant in the turret—and, though last not least, the energy with which the King represented himself to have acted—that it was difficult to reconcile it with the ordinary course of worldly events; and the public mind rather inclined to believe, what was certainly as likely in the abstract, that it was a conspiracy of the court against the two brothers.

James soon learned that suspicions to this effect were afloat; and, for the purpose of procuring evidence in his own exculpation, he advertised a reward to the man of the turret, who had never since been seen, provided he would give himself up, and submit to an examination. Henderson did so; and from his evidence, along with that of other persons concerned, a narrative was drawn up by the King, and published. This narrative, however, as it was written by James in the simple honesty of his heart, with the full impression of his fears warm upon it, and therefore, perhaps, a little exaggerated, served little to correct the evil. He had previously taken the extraordinary step of appearing in state upon the city market-cross, and personally attesting with his own mouth, every word of a discourse which his chaplain Galloway delivered on the subject to the assembled crowd. Remembering also the immense influence of the ministers over the public, he requested them to touch upon this subject in their sermons, according to a formula which he prescribed, taking an opportunity at the same time to incline the hearts of their congregations to thank heaven for its miraculous interposition in his favour. It is always, however, an unhappy thing for a man of rank to be thrown upon the mercy of an inferior. The preachers,

who had many causes of offence against the King, could not resist the present opportunity of annoying him. Under the pretext of the obscurity and contradictions of the received account of the conspiracy, and declaring that their consciences would not permit them to mingle *what might be false* with the edicts of truth, they refused to do any more than thank heaven in general terms for the preservation of the King's life. James, who observed with pain the bad example they were thus setting to his subjects, and who could not but remember how unscrupulously they had often assailed his own character and measures from the pulpit on the vagnest surmises, thought it allowable to take sharp measures with the recusants, and finally forced all except one to obey his behest, and even to preach the truth of the conspiracy at various places throughout the kingdom, besides their own proper churches. Such a proceeding may now be deemed odd, and even tyrannical on James's part; but the fashion of handling secular matters in the pulpit was introduced by the preachers themselves, and was quite a fashionable custom at the time. The solitary sceptic thus left, was the famed Mr. Robert Bruce. With him James condescended to have several personal interviews, in order to convince him of the reality of the attempt upon his life. Every act of deference, however, to a man of this order, as it exalted his opinion of himself, was only calculated to make him the more unflinching. When James found all his kindness misspent upon the 'proud puritan,' he deprived him of his benefice, and banished him from the kingdom. Strange to say, Bruce lived more than thirty years after in

exile on this account, rather than make the proper acknowledgements to the King, although long before the expiry of that period he had ceased to entertain any doubts of the conspiracy. Historians are usually loud in applauding this adherence to principle, as they call it: but surely Bruce should not have doubted the King, after he had condescended to make personal assurance of the fact; nor was it right to abandon a sacred charge, in which he was acknowledged to be eminently useful, for a matter so very insignificant, and so personal to himself. The proper feeling regarding this case should be one rather of pity than admiration—pity for talents, piety, and good intentions, all sacrificed to the meanest emotions of our nature, the pride of singularity in trifles, and the vulgar pleasure of triumphing over a superior when accident has put it into our power.

It is now doing nothing but justice to the King, which was not done to him in his own time, to say, that his situation on the 5th of August 1600, was really one of extraordinary peril, and that his conduct throughout the whole of the trying scene, seems, from all the known circumstances, to have been alike honourable to him as a king and as a man. From the issue of the conspiracy, so fatal to the conspirators, and to them only, we are apt to overlook his dangers altogether, and to say lightly that he was more frightened than hurt. But, though he happened to escape, we should recollect that, for several hours, his life was threatened by many varied dangers, which, but for his own discretion, and extraordinary good fortune, he could scarcely have evaded. In the first place, although Alexander Ruthven might only have de-

signed to seize his person, it is evident that he was soon induced, by fear of discovery, to resolve upon the last extremity of violence—to bind, and then to murder his victim. Let the reader only pause a little to consider the King's circumstances when that young man burst into the closet a second time, and made his declaration that "there was no remedy;" and he will scarcely fail to be struck by the peculiar horrors of the case. Let him conceive the desperate struggle which ensued—a struggle between a youth of full growth and strength, and a man whose constitution was originally the feeblest;—let him consider the remote and lock-fast place—the weakness of the royal retinue, compared with that of the Ruthvens—the utter isolation of the King, so to speak, amidst a wilderness of dangers; and he will find it difficult to withhold his sympathy from a fellow-creature under such an extraordinary trial. Be it recollected, that an unarmed man, exposed to one who is possessed of weapons, is apt to have very different feelings from one who is brought face to face in the usual way with a fair antagonist. No degree of what is called courage may avail in such a case. To part with life, moreover, in the heat of combat, is very different in anticipation from the idea of submitting in cold blood to the knife of the assassin. When all these things are considered, we are apt to allow not only the reality of the King's danger, which was so long denied by a party, but the great merit he had in preserving his presence of mind, and being able to exert himself for his own deliverance, under circumstances so apt to shake the nerves of even those who make heroism their boast and their profession.

A question may still arise in reference to the moving principle of this singular conspiracy. But, further than what is suggested at the beginning of the present chapter, it is impossible, while possessed of the present limited evidence, to penetrate into the mystery. The sum of the whole is, that it was the rash and ill-provided undertaking of two headstrong young men, in alliance with a more aged and vicious associate, having for its motives some vague desires of vengeance for real or fancied injuries, mingled strangely with some ambitious political views, which appear to have been still more indefinite. If there is an unusual mystery in the case, it is to be attributed solely to the singularly small number of the conspirators, their having withheld their secret both from writing and from the ears of friends, and the circumstance of their having died without examination. Should it still appear wonderful that the two brothers should have made such an attempt unassisted, let the cause of the wonder be sought in their peculiar character, as explained at the beginning of this chapter. It is surely much more likely, that two such adventurers as they, should form a wild and hopeless project for their own aggrandisement, than that the King, a man never characterized as sanguinary, and whose circumstances and prospects in life were the very best possible, should have thought of hazarding life, character, conscience, and all that he either possessed or expected, for the purpose of destroying two men against whom he had no imaginable cause of offence, and whose deaths, it cannot be made to appear, promised him the least advantage. Had there been no mystery in the Gowry Conspiracy, it

would have long ago been regarded as a simple and unimportant matter: had the brothers not been unfortunate, and the King unhurt, we believe that the guilt of the former would never have been doubted.

James's conduct in regard to those concerned or connected with the conspiracy, was such as might have been expected in that age from a monarch who had often been exposed to such attempts, and wished to prevent their recurrence. He caused three of Gowry's servants to be executed for drawing their swords against his attendants in the gallery-chamber, although it never could be made to appear that they foreknew the conspiracy, or acted from any other motives than the ordinary ideas of the time regarding the duty of a servant to a master. The estates and titles of the Earl he caused to be forfeited, all his near relations to be banished, his very name to be expunged from society; and the bodies of the two brothers, being dismembered, were dispersed for permanent exhibition on public places throughout the kingdom.* So completely successful was his attempt to depress the family, that no male descendant is now known to exist. But, with the unpleasing details of judicial vengeance, we should also relate, that, out of the rents of the forfeited estates, the King granted the large sum of a thousand merks yearly to the poor, as a mark of his gratitude to the Almighty for his deliverance.

It was not till eight years after, when James was removed to London, that Logan's share in

* Their heads remained on the western pinnacle of the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, till some time during the Civil War.

the conspiracy was discovered. Logan had employed a man of the name of Bour as his messenger in communicating with the two Ruthvens. Bour, being unable to read or write, although in every other respect well qualified for his duty, was obliged to call in the assistance of George Sprot, a notary at the sea-port of Eyemouth, that he might have the letters which Logan addressed to him read. Sprott, who thus became in some measure privy to the conspiracy, kept the secret till after the death of Logan and Bour, when he was so imprudent as to utter hints that he could make some discoveries regarding the mysterious enterprise of the fifth of August. The Privy Council immediately caused him to be apprehended, and, having examined him with the assistance of the torture, induced him to make a full confession of all he knew; after which he was immediately hanged for misprision or concealment of treason. Five letters, written by Logan, were afterwards discovered among his papers, and served to throw the feeble though fortunate light upon the conspiracy, which has been already presented to the reader. These valuable documents, having been engrossed in the records of parliament, are yet preserved in the national Register House at Edinburgh. *

It was a fact noted by the annalists of the time, that the unfortunate Charles I. was born on the very day (November 19.) on which the dismem-

* Almost every known or attainable document regarding the Gowry Conspiracy has been engrossed at length in Mr Pitcairn's Criminal Trials; and the present account of the transaction is chiefly drawn up from that immense multitude of testimonies.

berment of the two brothers took place at the cross of Edinburgh. Before this period, James had become the father of a daughter named Elizabeth, distinguished in British history as the grandmother of King George I., and therefore as forming the channel by which the blood of the family of Hanover reached the throne. The King was heard to remark, on the birth of Charles, that the nineteenth day of the month seemed to be consecrated in some peculiar way to his use. He was himself born on the 19th of June; he first saw his wife on the 19th of May; his eldest son Henry was born on the 19th of February; his daughter Elizabeth on the 19th of August; and now his second son was ushered into the world on the 19th of November.

CHAPTER X.

INTRIGUES PREPARATORY OF THE SUCCESSION.—DEATH OF ELIZABETH.

1601—1603.

The Gowry Conspiracy may almost be considered the last event of King James's Scottish reign. The time betwixt that and his accession to the English throne—about two years and a half—was spent in a state of tranquillity, to which there was no other exception than the hopes and fears arising from the intrigues which he set on foot for securing the object of his wishes.

James's right is so clear, in a genealogical point of view, that he is generally ridiculed by modern historians for the extreme anxiety and tenderness which he displayed on that point. But he had, in reality, great reason for the fears which seem to have agitated him. Although the claim of the Infanta of Spain, founded upon a remote descent from the House of Plantagenet, was the most visionary imaginable; yet it was held up by a great portion of the Catholics, in whose eyes religion went far beyond hereditary right. The claims of the descendants of Mary, the youngest daughter of Henry VII., were nothing in heraldry against

those of the Scottish royal family, which traced its descent from Margaret, eldest daughter of the same monarch. But, as Henry VIII., by act of parliament, and by will, had excluded aliens from the throne, and as it was anticipated that a considerable part of the English nation entertained an actual antipathy to the King of Scots, the hereditary enemy of their country, there was considerable danger that the laws of primogeniture, although favoured by the very principles of nature, might in this case be little attended to. Above all, there was the great difficulty of Queen Elizabeth's good will and pleasure to be taken into account; it being treason, by an act of the 13th of her reign, to dispute, that the reigning sovereign could, with consent of parliament, alter and destine the succession as might seem most meet.

It was under the compulsion of these good reasons, and partly from the natural anxiety which must ever attend the expectation of a large inheritance, however certain its determination, that King James thought it necessary, before the period now under review, to send emissaries to all the principal courts of Europe, and even to some of the minor states of Germany, setting forth his claims, and representing his disposition to be on good terms with them, in the event of their favouring, or not obstructing, his succession. For the latter reason, he took every expedient for gratifying Queen Elizabeth, upon whom he hoped at last to work so far as to procure from her a declaration of his right to be her successor; by which all his cares would have been at an end.

In conducting his various negotiations, he was put to great difficulty by the different faiths of

those whose favour he had to seek, and the hostility which some of them bore to his great English patroness. He was troubled in a particular manner by the necessity under which he supposed himself to lie, of conciliating the King of Spain and the Pope, two personages who were at open war with Elizabeth, and were the most odious possible to the greater part of his subjects, present and future, as the arch-enemies of the Reformed religion. For attempting to procure the good will of these potentates, and of the Catholics in general, by holding out hopes of toleration to this party, which he certainly did not afterwards realize, James is generally blamed, and surely not without reason, as guilty of a certain degree of meanness and duplicity. Yet it must be allowed in his favour, that he showed, throughout his whole life, equal favour to the Papists and Protestants, so far as individuals were concerned, and might be really unable, after his accession, to perform the promises of general favour which he had held out. His correspondence with the Pope was disclosed to Elizabeth some years before her death; but, as the grand reason for the Protestantism of that princess was nothing but the non-acknowledgment of her title by the Pope, and as she lost all fear on that score in her elder years, she does not appear to have conceived great indignation against her Scottish cousin for his tampering with the Pontiff, to whose creed at least, it is commonly understood, she never had any violent objections.

James's hopes of the succession were agitated a good deal by the proceedings of the famous Earl of Essex, Elizabeth's last and best favourite. Essex, who always professed to be a friend to the King of

Scots, entered into a correspondence with his Majesty, in 1600, at the time when he lay under the displeasure of Elizabeth, for having left his army in Ireland, and for the innumerable instances of caprice, and insolence towards herself, which marked the end of his life. The object of Essex's whole thoughts appeared to be a triumph over the party of his enemy Robert Cecil, her Majesty's sagacious secretary of state; and it was probably with a view, solely, of employing the King of Scots for this purpose, that he urged him in this correspondence to take up arms, and join him in an attempt to force Elizabeth to declare his Majesty her successor, promising, for the encouragement of the northern monarch, that Lord Mountjoy should bring over five thousand troops from Ireland, to further the same object. James was too cautious, and possessed of too little of the necessary means, to do what Essex prompted: the failure of such an enterprise must have been destruction to his hopes; while its success might only promote the views which Essex himself was suspected to have upon the supreme government. He fortunately resolved upon the wiser course of waiting till Elizabeth, now in her sixty-eighth year, should die, and leave her seat vacant for him.

Essex, as is well known, made an irruption [February 8, 1601,] into the city, at the head of only two hundred of his friends and dependents, and, in imitation of the Earl of Bothwell, attempted to possess himself of the person of his sovereign, for the avowed purpose of deposing her ministers, who, he professed, were favourable to the claims of the Infanta, and adverse to those of the King of Scots. Being foiled in this most rash and ill-con-

certed enterprise, he was tried for high-treason, and found guilty. A man of more worldly wisdom could not have failed, by working upon the absurd passions of Elizabeth, to procure mercy; but inflamed by disappointed ambition, instead of taking any pains to soften her Majesty's displeasure, Essex uttered the unpardonable expression, that "her mind was as crooked as her body," which being immediately carried to her ears, threw her into an agony of rage. It is said that, even at the very last, if he had sued with proper humility for his life, it would have been spared. But, as no petition of that kind reached her, and as she was convinced that his death was indispensable to the security of her government, she at last gave reluctant consent to his execution, which took place on the 25th of February.

On hearing of the seizure of this Earl, James had hastened, with feelings of sincere friendship, to send two ambassadors to sue for his life, giving them instructions, in the event of entreaties being found unsuccessful, to try the effect of threats. The first of these ambassadors, John Earl of Mar, the King's friend and school-fellow, and who possessed diplomatic abilities of no mean compass, was prepared to perform his duty with all the earnestness which a warm personal friendship could inspire; and his co-adjutor, Edward Bruce, Abbot of Kinross, from attachment to his lordship, was inclined to be equally zealous. But they did not arrive till the 6th of March, ten days after Essex's execution; when they could only congratulate the Queen on her delivery from the conspiracy; which had been assigned as the ostensible object of their mission. James afterwards confessed, that the

death of this unfortunate nobleman, although it at first appeared the loss of a prime partisan, was eventually found to be advantageous to his interests.

On the 8th of April, James wrote, from the palace of Linlithgow, a long letter to his ambassadors in England, enjoining them to beg a promise from the Queen, that she should do nothing in her own time to prejudice his right of succession, 'nor no checce under cure reserved against me, excepted alwayis if she be not to endure as long as the sunne and moone.' It is curious, at the present time, to observe some of the instructions which the King gives them in this letter. 'First, you are to obtaine all the certainty you can of the toun of London, that in dew tyme they will favour the rycht. Next, to renew and confirm your acquaintance with the Lieutenant of the Tower. Thirdlie, to obtaine as great certainty as you can for the fleete by the means of Lord Thomas Howard's nephew, and of some sea-ports. Fourthly, to secure the hearts of as many noblemen and knychts, as ye can get dealing with, and to resolve what every one of their parts shall be at that great day. Fyftly, to forsee aneat armourye for every shire, that, agains that day, my enemies have not the whole commandment of armoure, and my friends only be unarmed. Sextly, that, as ye have written, ye may distribute good seminories through every shire, that may never leave working in the harvest, till the day of reaping come, and generally to leave all things in such ordour and certainty that the enemies will not be able in the mean time to lay such barres in my way as shall make things remediless when the time shall come.'

The ambassadors, as James anticipated, were not successful in drawing from Elizabeth a declaration of his title; but they procured from her the lesser benefit of 2000*l.* additional to the pension of 5000*l.*, which the King had enjoyed for some years. They also obtained, what was almost as good as Elizabeth's declaration could have been, a promise from many of the chief councillors and nobility of her court, to the effect that they would espouse the claims of their King, and be ready, at the Queen's decease, to assert them. In these negociations much was owing to the address and zeal of the Earl of Mar; but perhaps the most favourable circumstance was Essex's recent death, which had occasioned a dislocation of parties, and turned the eyes of most men upon the King of Scots. The Secretary Cecil, a most cautious person, but who had befriended the Scottish monarch some years before against his mother, when attending the English embassy in France, now thought proper to open a secret correspondence with him; it being better, as he himself said in justification of his conduct, to keep the heir-presumptive quiet with good hopes, than, by neglecting him, to excite him to turbulent measures, which might even touch the life of the reigning monarch. Many other individuals about the same time also began to give James private hints of their favourable disposition to his claims.

An amusing story is told regarding the correspondence which Cecil maintained with the King. Elizabeth one day took an airing in her carriage over the heath in the neighbourhood of Greenwich Palace—Cecil being with her—when a Scottish courier happened to approach; and, as she had

heard no news from the the North for some considerable time, she requested that the man might be brought to her, to deliver his letters. Cecil, who had every reason to fear that the post-bag would be found to contain some clandestine communications to himself, was thrown into a state of great alarm by the incident; taking the packet, however, with an air of proper alacrity, he called for a knife to rip it up. Ere that could be brought, he pretended to smell the disagreeable effluvia of a nasty leather bag, and suggested that he might take the letters home and give them an airing before presenting them to her Majesty. To this the queen readily consented; for there was nothing she dreaded or detested so much as an offensive smell; and thus Cecil, by a simple effort of presence of mind, evaded an *exposé* which must have proved his destruction, and which he could by scarcely any other means have avoided. Cecil should by no means be blamed for the duplicity which he displayed in these intrigues. Considering the temptations which James had to try force of arms in asserting or anticipating his right, an English minister was justifiable in adopting every measure to keep him quiet. At this very time, not to speak of the recent temptation offered by Essex, his Majesty was solicited by the King of Spain to invade England with an army of that nation; and by the Pope to give up to him the education of Prince Henry, for the sake of securing the attachment and co-operation of the Catholics. In all probability, we owe it to the exertions of Cecil, interested though they were, that the succession was achieved without a civil war, or at least some considerable and sanguinary insurrec-

tion; so much may the wisdom of one man sometimes do for a nation.

It does equal credit to Cecil and to James, that the latter, with all his natural impatience on this subject, had the cool sense to appreciate the sedative lessons which the other read to him. The minister having assured his Majesty, in a letter, of his sincere zeal in his service, 'although he would not, as others had done, needlessly hazard his reputation and fortune before the time;' James, in his answer, thanked him for his plain and honest offer, and desired him to be assured that 'he could have no pleasure in seeing him hazard his fortune and reputation, since the loss of these would make him of less value to him;' adding, 'I protest, that, for your constant and honest behaviour in your sovereign's service, I loved your virtues long before I could be certain that you would deserve at my hand the love of your person: wherefore, go on and serve her truly that reigneth, as you have done; for he that is false to the present, could never be true to the future.' * The magnanimity of this declaration is entitled to high praise.

It is a remarkable thing, throughout all Cecil's correspondence, that he endeavours, by insinuations against most of the other persons who intrigued for James's favour, to draw his Majesty's

* Cecil's correspondence was managed by cipher letters, which were chiefly conveyed by the circuitous route of Ireland. Copies, deciphered by the Earl of Mar, have been preserved in the archives of that family. The above extracts are from the Life of Elizabeth, by Birch, who had seen second copies in the possession of Lord Hardwicke.

whole dependence upon himself. He speaks with peculiar severity of the Earl of Northumberland, a powerful and accomplished nobleman, who had proposed to James to be ready with all his vassals in the northern counties, to join any Scottish force which the King might afterwards find it necessary to bring into England for the vindication of his title. According to Cecil, Northumberland, although professedly thus favourable to the Scottish succession, was secretly adverse to it; and was, moreover, too vain and foolish a man to be trusted in any great undertaking. In proof of this, he relates a dialogue which was said to have taken place between the Earl and his Countess, and which, if true, certainly gives a curious view of the language of the better orders of the people in that age. Northumberland had said to his Countess, that he would rather see King James buried than crowned, and that he and his friends were resolved to lose their lives before they should witness the latter event. The lady—a sister of the late Essex, and therefore favourable to King James—and who, moreover, had no particular regard for her husband—responded to this declaration, that, rather than see any other than the King of Scots reign in England, she would eat the hearts of him and his friends in salt, although she were sure of the gallows immediately after! That Cecil was right in cautioning the King about Northumberland, is evident from a fact mentioned by the satiric Osborn, that his lordship vapoured in all places, and in all companies, about what he should do for the settlement of the succession, avowing that he should bring in King James by the sword. When we know this, we are less at a loss to ac-

count for the disfavour into which Northumberland fell after the King had acceded to his English seat. The truth is, he belonged to a small party of unprincipled and irreligious men, then beginning to be formed in England, who regarded very little besides their own advancement, and endeavoured to make a taste in letters and philosophy atone for the want of all more solid qualifications; the foundation, as it may be called, of that sect of men, who, under the denominations of Infidels, Philosophers, and Utilitarians, have figured more or less in every age from that time to the present. Among the other members of this fraternity, whom Cecil warned King James to beware of, were Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh: they, to use his own quaint phrase, completed, with Northumberland, 'a triplicity who denied the Trinity,' and were equally dangerous with his Lordship.

It was during the interval between Essex's death and the demise of Elizabeth, that James published his work entitled, 'The Trew Law of Free Monarchies, or the Reciprock and Mutuall Duetie betwixt a free King and his Naturall Subjects;' the object of which was, unquestionably, to prove himself to the English nation as fitted to become their ruler. We draw from this work a very clear view of the grounds he had for those notions regarding the extent of the royal prerogative, and the sanctity of the persons of kings, which are at the present day so fruitful a subject of ridicule and invective. The two grand foundations of his errors on these subjects, were his interpretation of the scriptural accounts of the Jewish monarchy, and his habit of arguing in what is called the

manner of the schools. He takes it for granted, for instance, in the very first sentence of the treatise, that monarchy is the best of all possible forms of governments, because it resembles that of Heaven by the Divine Being; a most flagrant instance of the absurdity of scholastic logic, so constantly contenting itself, in moral conclusions, with one external and unimportant resemblance. In the same strain he proceeds to show, that, while kings are to exercise an unlimited control over their subjects, as the anointed lieutenants of the autocratic and unimpeachable Deity, they are to have no reflective power over him, not even the privilege of complaining. They are to obey him at all hazards, as they would wish to escape the Divine wrath itself; and, even if he should become a perfect monster of tyranny, they are to take no measures against him, but leave him to be corrected by his Divine constituent. His theory is, that the errors of the people be corrected by the king, the errors of the king by God; and the only arms he allows the subjects to use, in any case, are *preces et lachrymæ*, time out of mind described as the proper weapons of the church. In his opinion, a bad king must occur rarely, because there are so many reasons why he should be good; but when such a contingency does occur, the subjects are to consider it as a judgment of the Almighty for their sins, and are to kiss the rod. At the very worst, they can console themselves by the reflection, that God, who is the sharpest and sorest of all schoolmasters, will amply avenge their cause in his own good time.

It would be an absurdity, almost equal to any ever committed by this literary monarch himself, to at-

tempt a serious exposure of the utter baselessness, and inapplicability of his arguments. But it is equally clear, that he might entertain all these notions, and act upon them in his own practice as a King, without incurring any blame. The truth is, he theorised exactly in the style of the age in which he lived, or rather in which he was educated; a time when there was no argument which could stand, in popular estimation, against a text of scripture; none which could bear up, in the eyes of the philosophical, against a syllogism. It was from these superstitions, and such as these, that the greater part of the miseries of the seventeenth century took their origin; and, strange as it may appear, the contest which had subsisted for so many years betwixt James and the Scottish church, depended solely from two contending texts, by one of which the King thought himself irresponsible to his people; while the clergy were persuaded by the other, that they ought to be exempted from the control of a civil magistracy. Was there any greater absurdity in the idea of a king, invested with an absolute power over the minds and persons of his subjects, than in that of a large body of professional men being exempted from every kind of control, and paying no obedience to the state under which they worked for their subsistence, and by which they were protected? These were the errors of a time when intellectual light was imperfect—the efforts of men to see the sun of knowledge through the mists amidst which it was rising. But perhaps the best apology for James, in regard to his notions of government, is, that even, at the present time, it is a science about which great doubts prevail among the wisest, and which, in

the most advanced of all countries, has yet scarcely passed its infancy. There can be no doubt that a time will arrive when this, like other sciences, will be understood with a degree of exactness such as to preclude all possibility of discussion, and when men will look back upon the agitations which the subject occasions in the present age, with a pity and wonder greater than what we bestow upon the theories of King James.

If any man entertains a grudge against this monarch for the high notions of the kingly office upon which he acted in his own reign, and by which he is supposed to have occasioned the ruin of his son, he would be completely mollified by a perusal of the treatise which has occasioned these remarks. It is there apparent that, if pretension to arbitrary rule was inspired in the royal author by any other thing than an idea of its consonance with scripture, it was by the purest feelings of benevolence in regard to his people. The pamphlet breathes throughout a strain of the kindliest sentiment: it contains scarcely a single harsh word from beginning to end. The very reason which he assigns for the publication in the first paragraph, is one of pure, though perhaps mistaken kindness, namely, that, by being made better acquainted with their duty to their sovereign, the subjects may avoid those rebellions by which the country had been rendered miserable almost ever since the Reformation; despotism being thus, by a strange error, though one quite natural on his part, assigned as a cure for disorders which had been occasioned in a great measure by itself. Throughout the whole tract, he talks rather with the benignant confidential tone of a father lecturing his children,

than that of a king giving orders to his people. 'The naturall zeale,' says he, 'that I beare to this my native country, with the great pittie I have to see the so-long disturbance thereof, for lacke of the trew knowledge of [the law of free monarchies], hath compelled me at last to breake silence, to discharge my conscience to you, my deare countrymen, herein, that, knowing the ground from whence these your many endless troubles have proceeded, as well as ye have already tasted the bitter fruits thereof, ye may [hereafter] escape and divert the lamentable effects that ever necessarily follow thereon.' Further, he proceeds in a strain of still purer and more touching philanthropy: 'By the law of Nature, the king becomes a natural father to all his lieges at his coronation: And as the father, of his fatherly duty, is bound to care for the nourishing, education, and virtuous government of his children, even so is the king bound to care for all his subjects. As all the toile and paine that a father can take for his children, will be thought light and well bestowed by him, so that the effect thereof redound to their profite and weale; so ought the prince to do towards his people. As the kindly father ought to foresee all inconvenients and dangers that may arise towards his children, and though with the hazard of his own person presse to prevent the same; so ought the king towards his people. As the father's wrath and correction upon any of his children that offendeth, ought to be by a fatherly chastisement seasoned with pity, as long as there is any hope of amendment in them; so ought the king towards any of his lieges that offend in that measure. And, shortly, as the father's chief joy ought to be in

procuring his children's welfare, rejoicing at their weal, sorrowing and pitying at their evil, to hazard for their safety, travel for their rest, wake for their sleepe; and, in a word, to think that his earthly felicity and life standeth and liveth more in them than in himself; so ought a good king think of his people.'

Surely it is impossible to read this most amiable, most candid, and most earnest piece of self-portraiture, without being convinced that James's errors as a king must have proceeded from his head, and not his heart.

One of the most remarkable things about this little book is, that, although written by the author for the purpose of recommending himself to the English people as their King, it makes no attempt to gain upon them by appeals to their prejudices, or by insidious promises of popular government. It did not suit with the upright candour of the Stuarts, regarding as they ever did their far-descended right, to offer cheaper or easier forms of government, to haggle with their people for degrees of rule, to attempt to undersell former sovereigns; *that* was left for another dynasty to do. James looks back upon his early ancestors, who conquered the land, and divided it among the companions of their swords; and he asserts, what is true in feudal law, that it is by his good will, as representing the first givers, that the present possessors enjoy their estates. 'As the Kings,' says he, 'were in Scotland before any estates or ranks of men within the same, and before any parliaments were holden and laws made; and as by them was the land distributed, (which at first was wholly theirs), states erected and decerned, and

forms of government devised and established—so it follows of necessity that the Kings were the *authors* and *makers* of the laws, and not the laws of the Kings. To prove which assertion more clearly, it is evident by the rolls of our chancellery, (which contains our oldest and fundamental laws), that the King is *dominus omnium bonorum*, and *dominus directus totius dominii*; the whole subjects being but his vassals, and from him holding all their lands as their over-lord, who, according to good services done to him, changeth their holdings from tack to feu, from ward to blanch, erecteth new baronies, and uniteth old, without advice or authority of either parliament, or any other subaltern judicial seat. So as, if wrong might be admitted in play, (albeit, I grant wrong should be wrong in all persons), the King might have a better colour for his pleasure, without further reason, to take the land from his lieges, as over-lord of the whole, then, as foolish writers say, the people might unmake a King, and put another in his room; but either of them, as unlawful, and against the ordinance of God, ought to be alike odious to be thought, much less to be put in practice.'

In this passage, nothing appears to a modern eye so remarkable, as the way in which he speaks of parliaments, seeing that that court is now regarded as more powerful, and far more indispensable, than the King. But, in James's time, parliaments in his own country were scarcely worthy of the name, while in England, from the depression they had suffered under the Tudors, and the eclât which had attended the arbitrary rule of Elizabeth, they occupied, in reality, but a subaltern place in the scale of government. But James

speaks still more plainly of this branch of the legislature :—' According,' says he, ' to these fundamental laws, we daily see, that, in the parliament, *which is nothing else but the head court of the King and his vassals*, the laws are but *craved* by his subjects, and only made by him at their rogation, and with their advice; for, albeit the King make daily statutes and ordinances, enjoyning such pains thereto as he thinks meet, without any advice of parliament or estates, yet it lies in the power of no parliament to make any kind of law or statute, without his sceptre be to it, for giving it the force of a law.' That James, under his present circumstances, should have published such sentiments as these, is certainly very strange. Yet, when we recollect, that the publication of the work in which they appeared had the effect rather of smoothing than of obstructing his way to the English throne, our wonder must in a great measure cease. Such theories must have been then agreeable to the feelings of the great mass of the people. No doubt, many men were then beginning to wish for the exaltation of parliaments; this was the age immediately before that of Selden. And there had existed for nearly two generations a germ of republicanism in the nations of Britain. But all such theories were as yet clandestine and obscure. And it only belonged to the King, when the different orders of men were peeping into the cabinets of antiquity in search of their primitive rights, to brush the dust, and untie the cord, from his time-dyed charters, and publish them to the world. The people were as yet unprivileged to commit theirs to the press; although the very next age saw

them held up the precious parchment on the points of their swords.

It did not escape the acute eye of Elizabeth, that, after the death of Essex, her courtiers turned their faces more and more decidedly from the 'bright occidental star,' under which she was figured, to fix their gaze and their worship upon the 'rising sun,' which was the corresponding epithet bestowed upon her cousin of the North. The loss of health, which began about this time to be perceptible upon her, and which was perhaps partly the cause, and partly the effect of their ingratitude; the anguish which she endured in regret for her unhappy favourite; the sense of mortification which accrued to her, from observing how little she was loved by any but the merest common people for her own sake: all conspired to throw a gloom over the latter days of this illustrious princess; and she, who had saved the inestimable benefits of the Protestant faith for her race, who had rendered her own country glorious, and increased the happiness of others, who had set the world an example of moral dignity, such as it could scarcely ever forget, was destined, in her decline, to experience the want of one true friend, and to exemplify the uselessness of all external glory in securing happiness, if unaccompanied by the blessings of the natural affections.

Among the many causes assigned for the decay of her health and strength, there can be no doubt that the death of Essex was the chief. Like the granite, which resists violent compulsion, but trembles to the touch of a finger, the stupendous mind of Elizabeth, after withstanding, for half a century, the most dreadful political tempests, was

moved from its solid foundations by the gentle pressure of love. She had been enabled, by the pride of womanly and of regal resentment, to sacrifice the man whom she loved on the block; but when she did so, she was blind to the state of her own heart. After he had expiated all that she could blame him for by his death, she was again free to love him, and passion returned in full tide, to occupy the space which resentment had for a moment filled. Besides all the pain arising from this source, she had the mortification of seeing, that the people did not love her so much since she had sacrificed Essex, their own as well as her favourite; and also the vexation of finding that her court was much more incontrollable since his death, as well as more bent on paying homage to her successor.

Elizabeth was one of those persons who never take medicine, and who can scarcely ever, upon any account, be brought to allow that they are unwell. She had all her life been remarkable for her frequent appearances in public, and for the near approach which she permitted the mob to make to her person. This was solely to convince her subjects that she was in good health. For the same reason, she always dressed as well as possible, and took every expedient for making herself be thought young. To people who, in the present day, see the ages of all the sovereigns of Europe in common Almanacks, it may appear strange that any uncertainty could have ever prevailed regarding Elizabeth's age. Yet it is true that she was able to keep up a kind of mystery on this subject. Paulus Heutznerus, a German civilian, in 1598, who has left a very minute account of her appearance, men-

tions, that she is *rumoured* to be about sixty-five years of age. She had been particularly careful all along to impress the King of Scots with an opinion of her high health and stout frame of body. A messenger of his told Osborn, a contemporary writer, that, whenever he was brought into her palace with letters from his Master, he was taken into a place, from which he could see, through a half-withdrawn curtain, her Majesty dancing among her maids to a little fiddle. It would even appear that she was willing to deceive herself on this subject; for not only did she accept of the extravagant flatteries of her courtiers, which her good sense must have enabled her to penetrate, but she had the miserable weakness to banish every thing in the shape of a mirror from her chambers for several years before she died, lest she should by any chance become aware of the changes which time had wrought upon her person.*

One of the obscure memoir-writers, whose works are so much drawn upon in this composition, relates a story of Elizabeth, which, though minute, and apparently trifling, is nevertheless of some account in the history of her decline. She one day happened, by some chance, to cast her eyes upon one of the articles which she had ordered to be excluded from her chambers, and, being in some degree fascinated by the sight, she could not resist the inclina-

* Her Majesty at this time condescended to use paint; and it is reported in Sir Robert Sibbald's account of the conversations of Jonson and Drummond, that her waiting-maids occasionally amused themselves by applying to the royal nose, the carmine which should have been laid upon her cheeks—being certain that she would not detect the trick.

tion she felt to inspect the image of her face. Bitter, however, was the regret she afterwards felt for indulging this curiosity. Her visage was now so lean and wrinkled, so wan and unlovely, that, after gazing at it for a little in a sort of stupefaction, she burst away in an agony of humbled and mortified feeling, exclaiming against the deceitful and interested compliments with which she was daily regaled, and conscious that, since she could no longer put trust in those, she could never again be happy.

The state of her health was such in January, 1603, that she was obliged to retire to Richmond. At this time, the ring which had been put upon her finger at her coronation, and which had never since been taken off, was grown into the flesh in such a way, that she was compelled, much against her will, to have it filed off; a circumstance regarded by her people, and perhaps also by herself, as a bad omen. The almonds of her jaws now began to swell, and she gradually lost her appetite. As disease increased upon her, she seemed to give herself more and more up to melancholy thoughts, and her courtiers of course became less and less assiduous in their attentions. Some time in the month of February, there occurred an incident which did much to accelerate her doom.

Some years before, when Essex was in the height of favour, he one day complained, that the efforts of his enemies to injure him in her estimation were incessant, and that he feared he should at some period fall a sacrifice to them. To assure him against such an event, she bestowed upon him a ring, which, she said, he should only have to send to her, in order to procure her pardon for any offence he might be accused of. When he was con-

demned to death, she naturally expected that he would have transmitted this token, and reminded her of her promise. But no token came; and it appears that one of the principal causes of her giving consent to his death, was an idea she entertained, that he scorned her too much to entreat for her forgiveness. Essex, however, had in reality attempted to procure pardon by means of the ring. Observing a boy playing under the window of his prison, he threw out the precious trinket, and desired him to carry it to Lady Scroope, with a request from the Earl of Essex, that she would convey it to the Queen. The boy unfortunately delivered the ring, along with the message, to the Countess of Nottingham, with whom Lady Scroope lived; and that lady was prevailed upon, either by her husband, or by Sir Robert Cecil—it is uncertain which—to suppress it. As her ladyship attended upon the Queen, and heard her daily mention the name of Essex with regret, she had abundant opportunities of repenting an action which had so evidently been fatal to her mistress. Soon after, being herself seized with a mortal disease, she thought it necessary for the peace of her mind to send for the Queen, and make disclosure of what she had done; after which she asked if her Majesty would forgive her. "God," said the agitated Queen, "may forgive you, but I never can;" and in the extremity of her emotion, she shook the dying lady in her bed, and left her with maledictions which she could not restrain herself from uttering. The wrath of a mind like Elizabeth's has always something in it more terrible than that of common minds, as the motion of a

large vessel in a stormy sea, is a more impressive and agitating sight than that of a boat or pinnace.'

'After this, a kind of benumbness seized her, with a deep melancholy; so she would sit silently, refrain from meat, and admit of no conference, except with the Bishop of Canterbury.'* In consequence, perhaps, of some vow, or inward resolution, she would not go to bed, but sat or lay upon cushions, which were arranged on the floor of one of her inner chambers. Her most common posture was to sit, with her eyes dejected upon the ground, and her finger placed listlessly in her mouth. Her kinsman, Sir Robert Carey, has left in his Memoirs the following striking picture of her utter desolation of mind.

'When I came to court, I found the Queen ill-disposed, and she kept her inner lodging; yet she, hearing of my arrival, sent for me. I found her in one of her withdrawing-chambers, sitting low upon her cushions. She called me to her: I kissed her hand, and told her it was my chiefest happiness to see her in safety and in health, which I wished might long continue. She took me by the hand, and wrung it hard, and said, "No, Robin, I am not well," and then discoursed with me of her indisposition, and that her heart had been sad and heavy for ten or twelve days; and in discourse, she fetched not so few as forty or fifty great sighs. I was grieved at first to see her in this plight; *for, in all my lifetime before, I never knew her fetch a sigh, but when the Queen of Scots was beheaded.*'

Sir Robert Cecil and other councillors now

* Baker's Chronicle.

thought it proper to ask the Queen who she should wish to be her successor. To this question, which she had forborne to answer all her life, she is said to have at last replied, that she would not have her kingdom to fall into the hands of *rascals*—such was the word she used in allusion to the remote pretenders—her throne had been a throne of kings, and she would have one of that rank to succeed her. They of course understood that she meant the King of Scots. James, before this, had given a sapphire ring to her attendant Lady Scroope, to be sent to him by the quickest possible means, the moment she should expire.

For a long time before this, there was scarcely a single officer about Elizabeth's court, of what rank soever, who had not made application for favour, either to King James in person, or to some of his favourites and attendants. Among others who took this precaution, was her kinsman Sir Robert Carey, whose account of her appearance at her last illness has just been quoted. This gentleman was previously acquainted with King James, having been first at his court in the train of Secretary Walsingham, and afterward on his own account, as the apologist of Mary's execution. According to his self-written memoirs, which form an exceedingly curious volume, 'hearing that neither the physicians, nor none about the Queen, could persuade her to take any course for her safety, and fearing her death would soon ensue, I could not but think in what a wretched state I should be left, most of my livelihood depending upon her life. And, hereupon, I bethought myself with what grace and favour I was ever received by the King of Scots, whensoever I was sent to him. I did

assure myself, it was neither unjust nor dishonest for me to do for myself, if God at that time should call her to his mercy. Thereupon, I wrote to the King of Scots, desiring him not to stir from Edinburgh; and if of that sickness she should die, I would be the first man to bring him news of it.' Good Sir Robert was one of those philanthropists, who, entertaining a warm and unfailing friendship for themselves, are not to be deterred from exemplifying it by the hazard of offending a little against delicacy or moral feeling.

'On Wednesday the 23d of March,' continues this writer, 'she grew speechless. That afternoon, by signs, she called for her council, and putting her hand to her head when the King of Scots was named to succeed her, they all knew he was the man she desired should reign after her.* About six at night, she made signs for the Archbishop and her chaplains to come to her; at which time I went in with them, and sat upon my knees, full of tears to see that heavy sight. Her Majesty lay upon her back, with one hand in the bed, and the other without; [for she had now been forced into

* Some doubts have been bandied about by different writers, as to the interpretation of this sign. The fact simply was—the Council desired her to put her hand to her head, if she wished the King to succeed her; and she did so. But whether this was her will or not, was surely of little importance. James's right was unquestionable; and surely, after her death, the law of the 13th of her reign, declaring it treason to deny that she could determine the succession with advice of Parliament, was null and void. The truth is, James's succession was less in violation of existing laws than her own had been, and in the opinion of many, his right was preferable to her own from the beginning, on account of the circumstances of her mother's marriage.

bed]. The Bishop kneeled down by her, and examined her first of her faith; and she so punctually answered all his several questions, by lifting up her eyes, and holding up her hands, as it was a comfort to all the beholders. Then the good man told her plainly what she was come to; and though she had been a great queen here upon earth, yet shortly she was to yield an account of her stewardship to the King of kings. After this he began to pray, and all that were by to answer him. After he had continued long in prayer, till the old man's knees were weary, he blessed her, and meant to rise and leave her. The Queen made a sign with her hand. My sister Scroope, knowing her meaning, told the Bishop, the Queen desired he would pray still. He did so for a long half-hour after, and then thought to leave her. The second time she made a sign to have him continue in prayer. He did so for half an hour more, with earnest cries to God for her soul's health, which he uttered with that fervency of spirit, as the Queen to all our sight much rejoiced thereat, and gave testimony to us all of her Christian and comfortable end. By this time it grew late, and every one departed, all but the women that attended her.

'I went to my lodging, and left word with one in the cofferer's chamber to call me, if that night it was thought she would die, and gave the porter an angel to let me in at any time when I called. Between one and two of the clock on Thursday morning, he that I left in the cofferer's chamber brought me word the Queen was dead. I rose, and made all haste to the gate to get in. There I was answered I could not enter; the Lords of the

Council having been with him, and commanded that none should go in or out, but by warrant from them. At the very instant one of the Council, the Comptroller, asked whether I was at the gate. I said yes. He said to me, if I pleased he would let me in. I desired to know how the Queen did. He answered, pretty well. I bade him good night. He replied, and said, Sir, if you will come in, I will give you my word and credit you shall go out again at your pleasure. Upon his word, I entered the gate, and came up to the cofferer's chamber, where I found all the ladies weeping bitterly. He led me from thence to the Priory Chamber, where all the Council was assembled: there I was caught hold, and assured I should not go for Scotland, till their pleasures were farther known. I told them I came of purpose to that end. From thence they all went to the Secretary's chamber; and as they went, they gave a special command to the porters that none should go out of the gates, but such servants as they should send to prepare their coaches and horses for London. There was I left in the midst of the court to think my own thoughts, till they had done council. I went to my brother's * chamber, who was in bed, having been overwatched many nights before. I got him up with all speed; and when the council's man was going out of the gate, my brother thrust to the gate. The porter, knowing him to be a great officer, let him out. I pressed after him, and was stayed by the porter. My brother said angrily to the porter, Let him

* George, Lord Hunsdon.

out; I will answer for him. Whereupon I was suffered to pass, which I was not a little glad of.'

Carey was now free to set out for Scotland, on his own account, without waiting for the permission of the Council. But, having been encouraged by that body to hope that he should be made their official messenger, he determined to linger at London till their pleasure should be known. As he was saddling his horse outside the gate, his sister, Lady Scroope, who had not before had an opportunity of delivering to him the sapphire ring which King James had placed in her hands, threw it to him over a window, and thus furnished him with a credential which might authenticate his intelligence, without the seal of the Council. He then rode to London, and, putting up at the Knight Marshal's lodging, near Charing Cross, waited till the Lords came to Whitehall garden.

'I stayed there till it was nine o'clock in the morning, and hearing that all the Lords were in the Old Orchard, at Whitehall, I sent the Marshall to tell them that I had stayed all that while to know their pleasures; and would attend them, if they would command me any service. They were very glad when they heard I was not gone, and desired the Marshall to send for me, and I should with all speed be dispatched for Scotland. The Marshall believed them, and sent Sir Arthur Savage for me. I made haste to them. One of the council, my Lord of Banbury that now is, whispered the Marshall in the ear, and told him, if I came they would stay me, and send some other in my stead. The Marshall got from them, and met me coming to them between the two

gates. He bade me begone, for he had learnt for certain that if I came to them they would betray me.

'I returned, and took horse between nine and ten o'clock, and that night rode to Doncaster.* The Friday night, I came to my own house at Witherington, and presently took order with my deputies to see the Borders kept in quiet, which they had much to do; and gave order the next morning the King of Scotland should be proclaimed King of England, and at Morpeth and Alnwick. Very early on Saturday, I took horse for Edinburgh, and came to Norham about twelve at noon, so that I might well have been with the King at supper time; but I got a great fall by the way, and my horse with one of his heels gave me a great blow on the head, that made me shed much blood. It made me so weak, that I was forced to ride a soft pace after; so that the King was newly gone to bed by the time I knocked at the gate. I was quickly let in, and carried up to the King's chamber. I kneeled by him, and saluted him by his title of England, Scotland, France and Ireland. He gave me his hand to kiss, and bade me welcome. After he had long discoursed of the manner of the Queen's sickness and of her death, he asked what letters I had from the council? I told him, none; and acquainted him how narrowly I had escaped from them. And yet I had brought him a blue ring from a fair lady, that I hoped would give him assurance of the truth that I had reported. He took it, and looked upon it, and said, 'It is enough; I know by this you are a

* 155 miles from London.

true messenger.' Then he committed me to the charge of my lord Hume, and gave streight commands that I should want nothing. He sent for his chirurgeons to attend me; and, when I kissed his hand at my departure, he said to me these gracious words; 'I know you have lost a near kinswoman and a mistress; but here take my hand, I will be as good a master to you, and will requite this service with honour and reward.'

'So I left him that night, and went with my lord Hume to my lodging, where I had all things fitting for so weary a man as I was. After my head was drest, I took my leave of my lord and many others that attended me, and went to my rest.

'The next morning by ten o'clock, my lord Hume was sent to me by the King, to know how I had rested; and, withal, said, that his Majesty had commanded him to know of me what it was that I desired most that he should do for me; bade me ask, and it should be granted. I desired my lord to say to his Majesty from me, that I had no reason to importune him for any suit, for that I had not as yet done him any service; but my humble request to his Majesty was to admit me a gentleman of his bed-chamber; and hereafter I knew if his Majesty saw me worthy, I should not want to taste of his bounty. My lord returned this answer, that he sent me word back, with all his heart I should have my request.' And the next time I came to court, which was some four days after, I was called at night into his bed-chamber, and there by my Lord of Richmond [the Duke of Lennox,] in his presence I was sworn one of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, and presently I helped to take off his clothes, and

staid till he was in bed. After this there came daily noblemen and gentlemen from our court, and the King set down a fixed day for his departure towards London.'

It will be observed from this minute narrative, that James received the news which told him of his long expected increase of kingdoms, without betraying any symptoms of that extravagant joy which might have been expected from his character. Perhaps, something is concealed by Carey. It is said by Osborn, that the messenger being unable 'to satisfy such a concourse of *doubts* and *questions*, as far more resolute natures than his do usually muster up on lesse occasions, the King stood in a maze, being more affected through the *feare of opposition*, than pleased with the present report; till, by a lamer poet, he was advertised of his being joyfully proclaimed in London, and of the unquestioned reception his title in all places met with. The truth seems to be, that James did not place entire reliance upon Carey's news, or at least was uncertain of the invitation of the English council, and therefore did not chuse to commit himself by expressing any particular feeling on the occasion. It was not till next morning, (Sunday, March 27,) when two official messengers arrived from the Council, informing him of his proclamation in London, and conveying the homage of the leading men in the kingdom, that he felt fully assured; and be it remarked, it was only then that he made a distinct offer of reward to Carey for his service. The two persons selected by the council to convey their allegiance to James were Sir Charles Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland, and Mr Thomas Somerset, son

of the Earl of Worcester. The letter which they brought contained a resentful allusion to the conduct of Sir Robert Carey; which it must be allowed, was not that of a gentleman, but rather the act of an unprincipled and uncaring adventurer; and such, it appears, was the general opinion at the time.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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OF

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

CONSTABLE'S MISCELLANY

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LIFE OF JAMES THE FIRST VOL. II.

WINDSOR CASTLE DURING THE REIGN OF CHARLES II.

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THE LIFE

OF

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

BY ROBERT CHAMBERS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE REBELLIONS IN SCOTLAND," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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KING JAMES THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

JAMES'S JOURNEY TO LONDON.

1603.

It would appear that the hesitation of King James, on receiving Carey's intelligence of the death of Elizabeth, was not without some corresponding feelings of the same kind on the part of the English councillors; for they are said to have spent fully six hours in feeling each other's pulses, before they came to the resolution of proclaiming the Scottish monarch as their sovereign. Elizabeth, indeed, had impressed men with such fears on the subject of the succession, and there was so much real danger of offending against some of her statutes, by acknowledging any particular successor whatever, that they might well be justified in pausing to learn the general sentiments, before they ventured upon this decisive step. There was a personal and nominal respectability in Elizabeth, which did not leave her

even after she was dead; and, as Falstaff trembled to approach even the lifeless corpse of the Scottish warrior whom he had lately seen fighting with such vigour, so also did the ministers of this lion-hearted princess scruple to take any liberties with what she had guarded in life so jealously and so well. It was not till they found themselves unanimous in favour of James, as the most rightful, and also the most eligible, claimant of the crown, that they came to the resolution of announcing him in that character to the people. No sooner, however, was this unanimity ascertained, than they proceeded in a style of heartiness, such as amply proved how clear they held his title, in comparison with that of any other competitor.

When their deliberations were finished, a proclamation was drawn up, and immediately uttered at the gates of Whitehall. It was signed by about thirty Peers, spiritual and temporal; and the man who read it was the most influential in the kingdom, Sir Robert Cecil, Secretary of State. It was immediately after uttered a second time at the west side of the High Cross in Cheapside, in presence of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, and of an immense concourse of the common people, who testified their approbation by shouts of "God save King James!" The proclamation contained an account of James's descent from Henry VII., and an assertion of his being the nearest in blood to the deceased sovereign; after which was a warm panegyric upon his character. There can be no doubt that, in the concoction of this document, and also the resolution of the Council in favour of James, Secretary Cecil was the principal instrument.

The news of Elizabeth's death being generally circulated over the country before any account of this proclamation, or of the resolution of the Council, the sheriffs of the counties and the magistrates of towns were thrown into a state of considerable agitation, and even alarm, regarding the line of duty which they ought to follow under such extraordinary circumstances. Thus, as the intelligence of the London proclamation reached them after different intervals of time, their proclamations resembled the straggling fire of an ill-disciplined regiment of militia, where one company takes its cue from the conduct of another, instead of the whole being directed by one general command. Only one sheriff, out of the whole number of these officers, had the hardihood to proclaim King James before receiving instructions from the Council. This was Sir Benjamin Tichborne, sheriff of Hampshire, a Catholic. He no sooner heard of Elizabeth's decease, than he hurried over to Winchester, from his country seat in the neighbourhood, and declared James to be King of England. James was himself so much pleased with this spirited act of service, that, after his settlement in England, he made a grant to Sir Benjamin, and his heirs for ever, in fee favour, of the royal castle in Winchester, with a yearly pension of 100*l.* during his own life, and that of his eldest son, Richard Tichborne, whom he also knighted. *

Similar to this was the conduct of the good town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the magistrates of which, hearing on Saturday of the death of Elizabeth, by

* Milner's Winchester, i. 389; and Nichols's Progresses of King James.

a message from Sir Robert Carey, which that expeditious courier had despatched to them in his progress, immediately wrote a letter to James, tendering him their allegiance and loving duty. This letter reached him on Sunday morning, before the official announcement of his succession. Much gratified by the promptitude and zeal displayed by this portion of his new subjects, he returned them a letter that very day, thanking them for their offers of duty, and assuring them that he should prove to them a most 'gracious and loving prince,' who should be careful to maintain their wonted liberties and privileges, and see 'that the same be na wayes brangillit nor utherwayes prejudgit.' He next day sent Lord Holyroodhouse to receive their allegiance in official form; and from the report which this nobleman brought back, of 'the triumph, love, and kindness he had been entreated with, and with what hearty applause the name of King James was received' by the community of this ancient town, it is affirmed that the King first conceived assurance of the flattering reception which he was destined to meet with in his new kingdom.

Early in the week, James received visits from a great number of the more influential men of both his kingdoms, who came with the profession of congratulating him, but in reality to bespeak favour to themselves, or to remind him of former promises. Among the earliest and most acceptable of his visitors was John Payton, son of Sir John Payton, lieutenant of the Tower of London, a personage whom, it will be recollected, he gave orders to have conciliated to his interest some years before. He was so much pleased to learn that this

important officer was true to him, that he conferred the honour of knighthood on young Payton, being the first time he had exercised that part of his prerogative on an Englishman; whence he ever afterwards called Payton *his first Knight*. The third person who came to him, was Sir Lewis Pickering, a gentleman of Northamptonshire, and a puritan, who, conceiving that his party might be advantaged by a priority of application, made haste to bespeak his Majesty's favour to that sect, before any deputation should arrive from the established church. He came last, however, in the best sense of the word; for his application was attended with no good effects to his party. James, two or three days after, received, by the hands of Dr Thomas Neville, dean of Canterbury, an address from the Church of England, tendering him the bounden duty of its members, and praying to know 'his pleasure for the ordering and guiding of ecclesiastical causes;' to which address he returned an answer, assuring those who sent it, that he was resolved to maintain the church as it had been settled by the late Queen.

During the course of this important week, James and the English council had several interchanges of letters and messages; and he testified his gratitude to the late Earl of Essex, by ordering all who were confined in the Tower on account of his insurrection to be liberated. Among the number was the Earl of Southampton. An amusing circumstance took place, when the royal messenger, Roger Aston, was for the first time brought before the English Privy Council. Being asked how the King did, Aston answered, in the full breadth of his northern dialect, "E'en, my lords, like a

puir man, that hath been wandering in the wilderness for forty years, and has at last come within sight of the Land of Promise!" Aston had formerly been the King's barber.

On the 31st of March, James was proclaimed at the cross of his native city, amidst mingled cries of joy and lamentation—joy for his good fortune, in which the people most heartily sympathized—and grief for the prospect of his leaving the country. On the evening of that day, the people kindled bon-fires in and about the city, and testified, by every means in their power, the pleasure which they felt on this auspicious occasion.

On the succeeding Sunday, April 3, he attended public worship in the principal church of the city, for the purpose of taking a formal farewell of his people. The minister, Mr John Hall, took occasion to point out the great mercies of God towards his Majesty, among which his peaceable succession to the throne of England was none of the least conspicuous. 'This,' he said, 'was God's own proper work; for who could else have directed the hearts of so numerous a people, with such an unanimous consent, to follow the way of right!'

At the end of the sermon, James rose up in his seat, and delivered the following speech to the congregation:—'Because that your preacher has spoken something in the harangue and discourse to the people, that as ye have matter by my presence to rejoice, sae ye have also matter by my absence to be sorrowful; but I say it is a matter of rejoicing not only to me, but to all them that love my standing; for this cause I thocht gude to speak to all gude people of all ranks, that ye may know to

was never my intention to usurp your crown, but being als lineally descended heir to the crown of England as to the crown of Scotland, as I was born richteous heir of the ane, sae am I richteous and mair richteous of the other; and as my love could never be fra that country, sae now my expectations have never been frustrat; and as your preachers have said baith learnedly and wisely, gif now my love be less for you, my people, what micht ye think of me, but that I be ane troker of kingdoms. Ye maun put ane difference betwixt ane King lawfully callit to a kingdom and ane usurper of ane kingdom, as the King of France came sometime (lately) frae ane kingdom to ane other, sometime fra France to Pow, and fra Pow to France, and could not bruik baith; as my richt is united in my person, for my marches are united by land and not by sea, sae that there is no difference betwixt them. There is nae mair difference betwixt London and Edinburgh, yea not sae meikle, than there is betwixt Inverness or Aberdeen and Edinburgh, for all our marches are dry, and there is nae ferries betwixt them. But my course maun be betwixt baith—to establish peace, and religion, and wealth betwixt baith the countries, and as God has joined the trust of baith the kingdoms in my person, sae ye may be joined in wealth, in religion, in hearts and affections; and as the ane country has wealth, and the other has multitude of men, sae ye may pairt the gifts, and every ane do as they may to help other. And as God has removit me to ane greater power than I had, sae I maun endeavour myself to nourish and establish religion, and to tak away the corruptions of baith countries. And, on the other part, ye mister not.

doubt, but as I have ane body as able as ony King in Europe, whereby I am able to travel, sae I sall vizzie you every three year at the least, or efter as I sall have occasion, (for sae I have written in my buke direct to my son, and it war a shame to me not to perform that thing that I have written), that I may with my awin mouth tak a compt of justice, and of them that are under me, and that you yourselves may see and hear me, and fra the meanest to the greatest have access to my person, and pour out your complaints in my bosom. This sall ever be my course. Therefore, think not of me as of ane King going fra ane part to ane other, but of ane King, lawfully callit, going frae ane part of the isle to ane other, that sae your comfort may be the greater; and where I thocht to have employed you with your arms, I now employ only your hearts, to the gude prospering of me in my success and journey. I have nae mair to say, but pray for me.' *

The effect of this harangue was such as to dissolve the assemblage in tears; for, however unpopular some of James's measures had been, especially those connected with the church, his easy and kindly manners, and his sincere attention to the public interests, had rendered him very much, and very generally beloved, in Scotland. He himself was sensibly moved, in return, by these marks of the affection of his subjects; and, when the magistrates afterwards came to receive his commands, he spoke to them in the most tender and affectionate manner, assuring them, that as his

* Copied, with reduction of orthography, from Wodrow's MS. Collections, folio, vol. xliii. article 63, Advocates' Library.

power to befriend them was now increased, so also was his inclination.

On Tuesday, the 5th of April, after having taken measures for the government of Scotland in his absence, and made arrangements for the future journey of his family, he set out from Edinburgh for London; accompanied by a considerable train of both English and Scotch, and followed by the blessings of many thousands of his native subjects. It was a strange, but perhaps a characteristic piece of conduct, that he took leave of his wife on the public street, thereby exciting the feelings of his people to a greater degree than even before.* Such of his countrymen as he had appointed to attend him into England, were chiefly those who had approved themselves his most steadfast friends before he *came to his kingdom*; the Duke of Lennox, the Earls of Mar, Murray, and Argyle, the Lord Hume, Sir George Hume of Dunbar, (Treasurer,) Sir James Elphinstone, (Secretary,) Sir David Murray, (Comptroller,) Sir Robert Kerr of Cessford; with the ordinary gentleman of the Bed-chamber, and six or seven individuals of the clergy. He was also accompanied by the French ambassador, whose wife happened to be so weak at this time, that she was carried in a slung chair, all the way to London, by eight porters, four of them to relieve the others.

Gallantly attended, and gay in heart, King James rode forward along that road which, according to the sarcastic remark of Dr Johnson, forms the most delightful prospect that Scotland can boast of; assuredly, no man ever paced it before or since who

* Nichols' Progresses of King James I., vol. I. p. 411.

had greater reason to acknowledge the pleasantness of the view. It was looked upon, however, as a bad omen, that, just as he approached Seton House, about twelve English miles from Edinburgh, a long lugubrious train was observed to develve from the exterior gate of that mansion, being the funeral procession of the noble owner of the house, Robert, first Earl of Winton, distinguished for adherence to Queen Mary, and one of whose sons was now President of the Court of Session, and intrusted, on this occasion, with the keeping of the Duke of Albany, James's second son. * The King, mirthful as he was, was solemnly impressed with this incident, and gave orders to stop his attendant cavalcade at the corner of the wall of the court-yard, till the remains of his mother's friend should be deposited in the adjacent church, whither the funeral company was proceeding. †

At his loyal burghs of Haddington and Dunbar, if any faith is to be placed in tradition, James was most joyously received, although he could spend but little time in either. He lodged that night in Dunglass Castle, the seat of his favourite counsellor, Lord Hume. Next day, April 6, he advanced towards Berwick, his train much increased by the gentlemen of the country, who came pouring in to congratulate him. Among others who joined him on this day's march, were the wardens of the Borders, English as well as Scottish; these officers being now seen in company for the first time. At the extremity of what are called the liberties of Berwick—a district extending a-

* Afterwards Charles I.

† This incident has been given, from tradition, by Sir Walter Scott, in more than one of his delightful works.

half a mile round the walls—he was met by the governor and his whole council of war, the constables and captains, the band of gentlemen-pensioners, and many private citizens of that ancient town. This was the first occasion on which he received the homage of any part of the military force of his new kingdom. On his approaching the gate by which he was to enter the town, he was saluted by a tremendous peal of ordnance, which in an instant shrouded the whole walls from his view,—being the most simultaneous volley, according to a contemporary writer, which was ever discharged in that place within the memory of any member of the garrison, although some of them had been there since the days of King Henry the Eighth, nearly sixty years before.* This cloud, according to the same writer, vanished before the radiant face of approaching Majesty, as the vapours of the sky fly before the morning sun. James was met at the gate by Mr William Selby, gentleman-porter of Berwick, who came out, in right of his office, to deliver up the keys of the posts to their supreme proprietor. After entering, his Majesty gave back the keys to Selby, upon whom at the same time conferred the honour of knighthood, as the first man who had put him in possession of any part of the property of his new kingdom.

The splendour of his reception was a little dulled by a slight shower, which at this moment began to fall. As it was, he progressed through streets lined with obeisant soldiers, and filled with

* 'And there are some olde King Harrie's lads in Berwick, I can tell you.'—*True Narrative of the Entertainment of his Royal Majesty, &c. apud Nichols's Progresses.*

acclaiming multitudes, to the market-place, where he was received with a congratulatory speech by the magistrates. On his name being pronounced in this speech as the first King of the whole isle of Britain, the people knelt on the earth, to express their homage, and then, rising again, uttered the most extravagant cries of joy—insomuch, that a person present thought they had been all struck simultaneously by a fit of madness. Here James was presented, according to the custom of that age, with a purse of gold, which he said he accepted as a token of the affection which the inhabitants carried towards his person. Those ceremonies ended,—they would have been much more elaborate but for the rain,—he proceeded to the church, where, after he had rendered thanks to God for the prosperity which had hitherto attended him, (a custom he is said to have always observed after a journey), he was regaled with a sermon by the famous Toby Mathew, Bishop of Durham, to whom this honour fell as a matter of course, Berwick being within his diocess.

It was not till after he had thus attended public worship, that he went to the house prepared for his reception, or partook of any refreshment. After he was housed, the rain passed away, and permitted the sun to break forth. One of his principal officers remarked, with an expression of surprise, how suddenly the day had been overcast as his Majesty was entering the town, and how suddenly it had again been cleared up. "Oh, no great matter," said the King with a smile; "suppose the first fair weather we had in the morning to represent the auspicious commencement of my journey, the showers to stand for the universal tears

of my country at parting with their King, then this sudden re-appearance of sunshine must emblematise the joy of England for my approach." * This may be accepted as a specimen of the *witty pertinent speeches* which are so often talked of with admiration by the more loyal of James's historians.

He spent the whole of the next day in Berwick, chiefly whiling away the time by inspecting the fortifications of the place, which, being very complete in every respect, and a sight perfectly new to him, must have amused and impressed his mind in no small degree. To testify the respect in which he held the military art, he shot off a cannon with his own royal hand, 'so faire,' says the flattering narrator of his progress, 'and *with such signe of experience*, that the most expert gunners there beheld it not without admiration, and there was none of just judgment present, but without flattery gave it just commendation.' 'Of no little estimation,' adds the same writer, 'did the gunners account themselves in, after this kingly shot. But his Majestie, above all virtues, in temperance most excellent, left that part of the wall and their extraordinary applause, and returned to his palace, and there reposed till the next day.'

On Friday, the 8th of April, James crossed the Tweed and entered the county of Northumberland, the sheriffs of which, accompanied by a great number of gentlemen, were ready to give him welcome. In the course of this day's journey, he visited an aged soldier called Sir William Reid, who, though blind with age, declared himself so

* Nichols' Progresses, i. 412.

cheered by the gracious presence of his sovereign, as to feel all the warmth of youth revived in his blood. From the residence of this veteran, to Widdrington Castle, where he was to lodge for the night, the distance was thirty-seven north-country miles; yet he rode over that ground in the incredibly short space of four hours. At Widdrington, he was entertained by Sir Robert Carey, owner of the mansion, who, as might be expected, proved a most complaisant host. While viewing the park that afternoon, James happened to espy some deer straying at a little distance; and notwithstanding the fatigues of his journey, he could not resist the passion excited by the sight, but began a hunting, from which he did not desist till two of the animals were slain.

Arriving at Newcastle next day, he spent that which followed (Sunday) in devotion, and on Monday released all the prisoners from the jails, except those who were confined for 'treason, murder, or *papistrie*,' giving great sums out of his own purse for the release of the debtors. He remained in Newcastle till Wednesday morning, his whole expenses borne by the citizens.

His journey on Wednesday, April 13th, was from Newcastle to Durham, including a digression which he made to Lumley Castle, the seat of Lord Lumley, which splendid place he viewed with much admiration. At Durham, he was entertained in the Episcopal palace, by the Bishop, the same Toby Mathew who preached to him at Berwick; and as this prelate was almost as eminent a sayer of good things as James himself, the royal conversation during the evening is said to have been uncommonly brilliant. On Thursday, April 14th,

his Majesty progressed to Walworth, the seat of Mrs Genison, widow of a gentleman who had been in the service of Queen Elizabeth; by whom he was 'bountifully entertained to his very high contentment.' In the course of this day's journey, he set himself down on the high grounds above Haughton-le-side, to enjoy the beatific vision which was there opened to him—the fairest portion of Yorkshire, in its turn the fairest portion of England—the gallant Tees, with all its woodlands, pastures, feedings, and farmholds, stretched out in quiet beauty, and, as it were, inviting him to come on and take possession: a scene presenting such a contrast to the *pampera regna*, which he had left behind in the north, as must have almost bewildered his senses, or disposed him, at least, says a spirited writer,* had he been a man of common character—to exclaim, in the words which a poet has since fancied for a similar occasion,

> 'Where's the coward that would not dare
> To fight for such a land!'†

In all probability, as James sat with his legs crossed, on this delightful spot—for such was his attitude, the place from that circumstance being still called *Cross-Legs*—he only congratulated himself on having been born with the sacred and indefeasible right to inherit and possess so much good land, or, like a true Scotsman, might endeavour to erect the Carse of Gowry, or the plains of East Lothian, into a parallel place in his estimation with the fair scene before him. James, it

* Mr Surtees, in his History of the County Palatine of Durham.

† Marmion.

must be observed, was too much impressed with a sense of his hereditary right to his new kingdom, to be very much elevated with his succession to it. In a letter to his son before quitting Scotland, he says he was a king before, and he is now no more than a king; a sentiment full of pride; and, if he allows that this accession of kingdoms brings an increase of honour and greatness, he says it also brings a proportionate increase of cares.

He advanced, next day, from the hospitable seat of Mrs Genison, to the house of a Mr Ingleby, near Topcliffe, being attended by the High Sheriff of Yorkshire, who, with a gallant train, had met him by the way. From Topcliffe, he proceeded on Saturday to York, the Sheriffs of which met him at the extremity of the liberties, three miles from the city, where they presented him with their white staves. Within a mile of York, he was saluted by Lord Burleigh, (elder brother to his faithful friend Cecil,) who was President of the Council in the North of England, and by far the most important officer who had yet given him welcome. Attended by this nobleman and his retinue, by the sheriffs of the city and county, and by his own proper train, which was by this time swelled to an enormous amount, he advanced towards the gate, where he was received by the mayor, aldermen, and principal citizens, the first of whom delivered to him the double compliment of a congratulatory speech and a cup full of gold. There was here a slight dispute betwixt the Mayor and Lord Burleigh, as to which should bear the sword before his Majesty in his progress through the city. To decide the question in a way which should give no offence to either party, James facetiously asked if

they would permit him, in this case, to have the disposal of his own property; and, both answering that they should be happy to abide by his decision, he committed the object in dispute to the Earl of Cumberland, the most distinguished soldier present, (called by Queen Elizabeth *her champion*), who forthwith carried it before him into the city.

It was here that James might be said to have, for the first time, taken upon him the state and office of the King of England; for on his arrival at York, he found the Secretary Cecil, and others of his Privy Council, with whom he proceeded to hold conference on matters relating to government, and who began to form something like a court around him. The gracious reception which Cecil met with gave very general surprise, for the greater part of the nation only remembered the part which this statesman's father had taken in the death of Queen Mary; the correspondence which he had held with the King being of course a profound secret.

The day after his arrival at York being a Sunday, he went to attend public worship in that glorious Minster, which, it is easy to conceive, must have been, with all its garrison of churchmen and attendants, fully as great a wonder to his royal mind as either the fortifications of Berwick or the scenery of Teesdale. As he left his lodging to go to church, he was offered a coach; but he declined it, saying, in a kind manner, that, as the people were desirous to see a king, he was anxious to gratify them, and he should therefore walk, so as to exhibit his person as well as his face. This condescension gave very general satisfaction. He returned in the same manner. This day, after

dinner, he conferred a great number of knighthoods, in the garden connected with the house in which he lived, which was the palace of Lord Burleigh. The only unhappy incident of the day was the apprehension of a Catholic seminary priest, who, under the disguise of a lay gentleman, had delivered to his Majesty a petition in favour of the Catholics. This criminal, for such he was held by the prejudices and the laws of that time, was committed to jail. James here, as at Newcastle, opened all the jails, except to traitors, murderers, and Papists; an association of names which the historians of the day present without the least comment, however much it may surprise and shock the ears of the present generation.

James was entertained at York in a style of liberality and magnificence worthy of that ancient city, once the capital of England. Lord Burleigh kept open house for all comers, during the time he continued in the palace, which was for two complete days; and, on Monday, the Mayor entertained him at a sumptuous feast, which excited the wonder of all his Scottish attendants. Perhaps it was here that James made a droll remark, which has been recorded by tradition in Scotland. Some English courtier was so ill-bred as to observe, that very few mayors in Scotland could have given entertainment to so many persons as were here assembled; to which the King instantly replied, "Fy, man, there's a provost in Scotland that keeps an open house a' the year round, and ay the mae [*the more*] that come the welcomer." He alluded to the chief magistrate of a certain Scotch burgh, (supposed to be Forfar, the capital of Angus,) who kept an alehouse.

After this grand civic entertainment, his Majesty left York, and rode to Grimstone, the seat of Sir Edward Stanhope, where he lodged for the night. Next day, Tuesday, April 19, after dining with Sir Edward, who was High Sheriff of the county, he rode towards Doncaster, stepping aside by the way to see Pontefract Castle. At Doncaster, he lodged in an inn which bore the sign of the Sun and Bear, the host of which he repaid next day for his entertainment, by 'the lease of a manor-house in reversion, of good value.'

On the 20th, being Wednesday, he progressed towards Worksop, the seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury, where he intended to lodge for the night. At Bautry, where he crossed the limit of Yorkshire, and entered the county of Nottingham, he was left by the Sheriff of the former district, and met by the Sheriff of the latter, who was 'most gallantly appointed both with horse and man.' A little farther on, within a mile of Blyth Hall, he alighted from his horse, and, sitting down upon a bank by the way-side, partook of a slight refreshment. As he approached Worksop, he was saluted from the park by a vision of huntsmen, the chief of whom pronounced a congratulatory speech, and offered to show him some game; a pleasant and well-devised conceit on the part of the Earl of Shrewsbury, than which scarcely any thing could have been more agreeable to his royal guest. The King at once consenting to the terms of the speech, a hunt was commenced in the park, wherewith his Majesty, says the narrator of the progress, was 'very much delighted.' His entertainment at Worksop was of a kind and extent still more

astonishing than what he had experienced at any other place: 'besides the abundance of all provision and delicacie, there was here a most excellent soule-ravishing musique, wherewith his Highnesse was not a little delighted.' He quitted the Earl's hospitable mansion next morning after breakfast, the relics of the viands, which were in themselves immense, being 'left open for any man that would, to come and take.' At Worksop, before his departure, he conferred the honour of knighthood upon nineteen individuals.

This day, Thursday the 21st of April, he advanced to the town of Newark-upon-Trent, where, taking up his quarters in the castle, which was the property of the crown, he might be said, for the first time since his entry into England, to have lodged in a house of his own, or at his own expense. The Corporation of Newark met the King as he entered the town, and, by the mouth of the Alderman, their chief magistrate, expressed their affection towards him, presenting him, at the same time, with 'a faire gilt cup.' The speech was in Latin, and it was expressed in a way so agreeable to the royal taste, that, when he was about to quit the town next day, he desired to hear it repeated. On this request being complied with, he asked the good alderman what was his name. Being told that it was Twentyman, he said, 'somewhat sharply, Then, by my saule, man, thou art a traitor: the Twentymans pulled down Redkirk in Scotland!' He was, upon the whole, so well pleased with this orator, that he conferred upon him the office of purveyor of wax for the King's household, in the counties of Nottingham, York, Lincoln, and Derby; and ever after had him in at-

tendance when he came to hunt in Sherwood forest.

During his brief residence at this town, there occurred an incident which has given occasion to much unfavourable remark among his historians. A cut-purse, who confessed that he had followed the court, in the exercise of his profession, all the way from Berwick, and whose activity was evident from the great quantity of gold found upon his person, being here taken *in the very fact*, James, without waiting for trial, directed a precept to the Recorder of Newark, for the immediate execution of the criminal. Whether this was done in consideration of a right which he might have to inflict summary punishment for an offence committed within the precincts of the court, or with a reference to the custom of Scotland, which allowed of punishment without trial, in cases where the crime was palpable and evident to the public eye,—*red-hand*, as it was called,—cannot now be ascertained. But it is plain that James gave the order quite as a matter of course, and entirely without any idea of taking undue advantage of his kingly prerogative. This act, however, was commented upon, at the time, as too violent to be acceptable to the people of England. Sir John Harrington, who was at this very time paying court to the King, says of it, 'I hear our new King hath hanged one man before he was tried; 'tis strangely done: now, if the wind bloweth thus, why may not a man be tried before he has offended.' Later writers have animadverted on the fact with much greater severity, and almost made it appear that this wretched pickpocket was the proto-martyr of the tyranny of the Stuarts. We

cannot help thinking, however, that, at the very worst, it was a mere piece of inadvertency, or a mistake arising from the King's education in Scotland, where it is evident, from the criminal records, that he was in the habit of inflicting or withholding punishment at his own discretion; the difficulty of executing the precepts of justice in that country perhaps leaving more power in his hands than could be allowed under the stronger and better regulated government of England.

He left Newark on Friday the 23d of April, and advanced to Belvoir Castle, the splendid seat of the Earl of Rutland, 'hunting all the way.' His entertainment at this house was of the most sumptuous kind, and yielded him 'exceeding pleasure.' Next morning, after breakfast, and after he had dubbed a score or two of knights, he set forward to Burleigh, dining by the way at the seat of Sir John Harrington. 'His Majestie, on the way, was attended by many lords and knights, and before his coming there was provided train scents, and live haires in baskets, being carried to the heath, that made excellent sport for his Majestie; all the way betwixt Sir John Harrington's and Stamford, Sir John's hounds, with good mouths following the game, the King taking great leisure and pleasure in the same. Upon this heath, not far from Stamford, there appeared to the number of a hundred high men, that seemed like the Patagones, huge fellowes, twelve or fourteen foote high, that are reported to live on the Mayne of Brazil, neere to the streights of Megallant. The King at the first sight wondered what they were, for that they overlooked horse and man. But, when all came to all, they proved a company of

poore honest suitors, all going on high stilts, preferring a petition against the Lady Hatton. What their request was I know not; but his Majestie referred them till his coming to London, and so past on from these giants of the Fen towards Stamford; within halfe a myle whereof, the bailiffes, and the reste of the chief townsmen of Stamford, presented a gift unto his Majestie, which was graciously accepted; so rid he forward through the towne in great state, having the sword borne before him, the people joyful on all parts to see him.' *

At Burleigh Hall, the seat of Thomas second Lord Burleigh, (brother to Sir Robert Cecil, the King's most confidential minister), 'he and all his traine were received with great magnificence, the house seeming so riche, as if it had beene furnished at the charges of an Emperour. * * * The next day, being Easter-day, there preached before his Highness the Bishop of Lincolne; and the sermone was no sooner done, but all offices in the house were set open, that every man might have free accesse to butteries, pantries and kitchens, to eat and drink in, at their pleasures.'

On Monday, the 26th of April, James rode back to Sir John Harrington's house, probably to enjoy another day's hunting with the knight's good hounds. But his sport, if such he designed, was prevented by his horse falling with him; an accident by which he 'dangerously bruised his arm, to the great amazement and griefe of all them that were about his Majestie at that time. But he, being of an invincible courage, and his blood yet

* Narrative, &c.

hotte, made light of it at the first, and being mounted again, rode to Sir John Harrington's, where he continued that night.'

The true extent of the injury which James received by this accident, was a rupture in one of his clavicles.* Yet, partly from a dread of being taken in hands by his physicians, of whose operations he entertained a sincere horror at all periods of his life, and partly from a wish to cause no interruption to the mirthful humour of his subjects, he concealed that fact, and only acknowledged that he was a little bruised. Being unable, however, to continue his journey on horseback, he left Sir John Harrington's house next morning in a coach; thus returning to Burleigh, 'where he was royally entertained as before, but not with half that joy, the report of his hurt had disturbed all the court so much.'

His next stage, on Wednesday, April 27, was to Hinchinbrooke Priory, the seat of a very remarkable person—Oliver Cromwell, uncle and godfather to the Protector, but who was, in every respect of character, the reverse of his famous namesake. 'In the way, he dined at that worthy and worshipful knight's, Sir Anthony Mildmay's, (Althorp), where nothing wanted in a subject's duty to a soveraigne, nor any thing in so potent a soveraigne to grace so loyal a subject. Dinner being most sumptuously furnished, the tables were covered with costly banquets, wherein every thing that was most delicious for taste proved more delicate by the art that made it seem beauteous to the eye, the lady of the house being one of the

* So we are informed by a letter of Sir R. Cecil.

most excellent confectioners in England, though I confess many honourable women very expert.' †

Before he reached Hinchinbrooke, he passed over a common which Sir John Spencer, in consequence of a grant from Queen Elizabeth, had partly appropriated, to the great distress of the people of the neighbourhood, who had been accustomed to derive part of their subsistence from this source. The impropriation of commons by the country gentlemen, was one of the chief causes of popular discontent in this reign; and there can be no doubt, that, although beneficial to the country at large, it was a source of much misery among individuals. A story is told of James—that, being on a hunting excursion in Berkshire, he espied a man in the stocks at the corner of one of these pieces of ground, who saluted him with the extraordinary exclamation, "Hosanna to your Majesty!" This caused the King to ask the proprietor of the common, who rode by his side, what the poor fellow was confined for. He was informed that it was for stealing geese from the common; when the culprit cried out, "I beseech your Majesty, be judge which is the greater thief, I for stealing geese from the common, or his Worship for stealing the common from the geese." James was touched by an appeal thus applicable at once to his humanity and his sense of the ludicrous; and

† 'Dinner and banquet being past, and his Majestie at point to depart, Sir Anthony, considering how his Majestie vouchsafed to honour him with his royal presence, presented his Highnesse with a gallant Barbary horse, and a very rich saddle, with furniture suitable thereunto; which his Majestie most lovingly accepted, and, so taking his princely leave, set forward on the way.'

he said to the gentleman who was complained of, "By my saul, I'se not dine to-day on your dishes, till you restore the common for the poor to feed their flocks." His host complied with this request, and also gave immediate freedom to the witty remonstrator.* It is not recorded that he paid a similar attention to the petitions which were here presented to him against Sir John Spencer.

Oliver Cromwell, who was to be the King's landlord this evening, was one of the most popular and beloved characters in all Huntingdonshire, one of the genuine old country gentlemen of the past age, who were destined to become so completely extinct in the next. This excellent person had no sooner learned that he was likely to become the host of his sovereign, than he hastened to make preparation for his proper reception, laying in stores of all kinds of meat and drink, and even making considerable additions to the extent of his house. He met the King at the gate of the great court, and conducted him along a walk that led to the principal entrance of the house. After his Majesty had entered, the doors were thrown wide open, so as to admit all who chose to enter, whether their purpose was to have audience of the King, or only to see his person; and each individual was welcomed with the most costly viands and precious wines, even the humblest populace having free access to the cellars. Hospitality exerted in this degree, was here become a much more wonderful thing than it had been on any former part of James's progress; for the multitudes which had hitherto flocked to see him, were nothing to the

* Archy Armstrong's Jestes, London, 1640.

myriads which he attracted in this more populous district. 'There was such plenty and variety of meates, such diversitie of wines, and those not riffe-raffe, but even the best of the kind, and the cellars open at any man's pleasure. And if it were so common with wine, there is little question but the buttries for beere and ale were more common; yet in neither was there difference; for whoever entered the house, which to no man was denied, tasted what they had a mind to, and after a taste found fulnesse; no man like a man being denied what he would call for. As this bounty was held back to none within the house, so for such poor people as would presse in, there were open beere-houses erected, wherein there was no want of bread and befe for the comfort of the poorest creatures. Neither was this provision for the little time of his Majesties stay, but it was made ready fourteen days, and after his Highness' departure distributed to as many as had a mind to it.'

The King remained with Cromwell until he had breakfasted on the 29th—that is, one full day and two nights. At his leaving the house, he expressed himself gratified in the highest degree with the entertainment which his host and hostess had purveyed to him; saying in his broad accent, as he passed through the court, "Marry, man, thou hast treated me better than any man since I left Edinburgh." The probability is, he was treated better here, than he ever was before or after; for it was generally allowed at the time, that Cromwell gave, on this occasion, *the greatest feast that ever had been given to a sovereign by a subject*; which must be allowed to have been no small praise,

when we consider the splendid entertainments given to Elizabeth. It is pleasing to record that James retained a grateful sense of the good squire's hospitality. He not only honoured him with his personal friendship, but he made him a knight of the Bath before his coronation, and he afterwards gave him several good grants, which, we have no doubt, had a sensible effect on the internal comforts of Hinchinbrooke Priory. *

At Good-Manchester, a small town not far from Huntingdon, James was surprised by a very extraordinary scene; seventy teams of horses, all traced to 'faire new ploughs,' being here brought to him, as a present, by seventy husbandmen, in obedience to some peculiar antique tenure. Good-Manchester, it seems, was a town, 'for several centuries highly celebrated for the goodness of its husbandry;' and some early king had bestowed lands upon its denizens, under the condition that they should meet him and his successors, whenever they approached the town, with seventy of those implements by which they had wrought themselves so good a name as agriculturists. James, amused at the odd nature of the present, inquired into this part of the history of Good-Manchester; after which, learning that he was still nominally the proprietor of their lands, he said he was glad to be landlord of so many good husbandmen in one town; and enjoined them to continue to use

* Good Sir Oliver, who had been the friend of the Stuarts, lived to be despoiled and distressed by their arch-enemy, his celebrated nephew, who paid him a visit during the civil war. The worthy knight survived all the tempests of that period with unshaken loyalty.

their ploughs as well as their ancestors had done before them.

Soon after leaving Good-Manchester, he passed out of Huntingdonshire into Hertfordshire; and there, of course, he was left by the sheriff of the one county, and met by him of the other. There was something unusually fine in the style and retinue of the latter officer, Sir Edward Denny by name. He was 'attended by a goodly company of proper men, being in number seven score, suitably apparelled, their liveries blew coates, with sleeves parted in the middest, buttoned behind in jerkin fashion, and white doublets, and hats and feathers, and all of them mounted on horses with red saddles. Sir Edward, after his humble dutie done, presented his Majesty with a gallant horse, a riche saddle, and furniture correspondent to the same, being of great value, which his Majesty accepted very graciously, and caused him to ride on the same before him. This worthy knight, being of a deliver spirit, and agil body, quickly mounted, managing the gallant beast with neate and eiduing workmanship, being in a rich sute of a yellow dun colour, somewhat neere the coloure of the horse and furniture. And thus, in brave manner, he conducted his Majestie on to Maister Chester's house, where his Majestie lay that night on his own royal charge.'

James being now within twenty miles of London, the crowds which flocked to see him were materially increased. It is generally understood, that he felt seriously aggrieved by the pressure of the multitude around him; and that, on being interrupted by them when he was one day engaged

in a hunt, he expressed a peevish wish that they would forbear from hunting him. This report, however, seems to be in a great measure a mistake, arising from his proclamations to restrain the accumulation of people around him, and his having, at various stages of his progress, dismissed numbers of gentlemen who had come to see him, to their own homes. Both Hume and Robertson, contrasting his conduct in this matter with the popular manners of Elizabeth, represent him as having sunk at the very first in public estimation, by the coldness with which he received the homage of his subjects. It is strange that, in none of the original documents on which the history of this affair can be grounded, is there the least hint given of such a sentiment having been observable in the King.* The only reason he seems to have had for his attempts to lessen the crowds, was the enormous price to which they caused all articles of provisions to rise; an evil bearing hard on the pockets of those who necessarily attended him. In a document which we are about to quote, it will be seen, that, on being stayed by the London mob, he expressed neither impatience nor disgust, but seemed inspired with the very opposite feelings. And perhaps it ought to be allowed, as exculpatory evidence against the charges of the respectable historians just alluded to, that, in his

* Perhaps the mistake is founded on a passage in Wilson's History of Great Britain, referring to his hunting excursions, some time after he had arrived in England. Being then much exposed to needy and impertinent petitioners, who thronged about him in such numbers as even to interrupt his sport, he is said to have sometimes bid the people begone from him with execrations.

first speech to parliament, he acknowledged himself gratified in the very highest degree by the enthusiastic welcome he had every where met with, particularizing the excessive multitude, and the affectionate behaviour of the crowds, in language which was any thing but cold.

It may be worth while here to quote the account which Sir Francis Bacon, in a letter to the Earl of Northumberland, has given of the King's deportment on his journey; an account not apt to be flattering, since the writer was somewhat disappointed in the object for which he visited his Majesty, that of procuring audience and favour. 'I have had no private conference to purpose with the King. No more hath almost any other English. For the speech his Majesty admitteth with some noblemen, is rather matter of grace than matter of business; with the attorney he spake, urged by the Treasurer of Scotland, [the Earl of Mar,] but no more than needs must. Your lordship shall find a prince the farthest from vain glory that may be; and *rather like a prince of the ancient form than the latter time.* His speech is swift and cursory, and in the full dialect of his country; in speech of business, short; in speech of discourse, large. He affecteth popularity by gracing such as he hath heard to be popular, and not by any fashions of his own: he is thought to be somewhat general in his favours, and his virtue of access [accessibility] is rather because he is much abroad, and in press, than that he giveth easy audience. He hasteneth to a mixture of both kingdoms and occasions, faster perhaps than policy will well bear. I told your lordship once

before, that methought his Majesty rather asked counsel of the time past than the time to come.' *

It was on Tuesday, the 3d of May, that he approached Theobald's, the seat of Secretary Cecil, twelve miles from the capital. To give the reader an idea of the crowds which flocked thither to see him, John Savile, the writer of an account of his entry into London, says that he himself, sitting in a window of the Bell at Edmontone, (unquestionably the same inn alluded to in 'John Gilpin,') reckoned three hundred and nine horsemen, and a hundred and thirty-seven pedestrians, pass along from London, in half an hour; and the landlord declared, that the flow of passengers had continued, at nearly the same degree of copiousness, during all that and the preceding day. 'As his Highness,' continues this writer, 'was espied coming towards Theobald's, for very joy many ran from their carts, leaving their team of horses to their own unreasonable directions. On his approaching nigh unto Theobald's, the concourse of people was so frequent, every one more desiring a sight of him than another, that it was incredible to tell of. * * Then for his Majesties coming up the walk, there came before his Majestie some of the nobilitie, some barons, knights, esquires, gentlemen, and others, among whom were the Sheriffs of Essex, and the most of his men, the trumpets sounding next before his Highness, sometimes one, sometimes another; his Majestie not riding conti-

* Letters and Memoirs of Bacon, apud Memoirs of the Court of King James the First, by Lucy Aiken, who adds, 'The extensive application of this concluding remark needs scarcely be pointed out; it well exemplifies the prophetic sagacity of its author.'

mally betwixt the same two, but sometimes one, sometimes another, as seemed best to his Highness, *the whole nobilitie of our land and Scotland round about him*, observing no place of superiority, all bareheaded; all whom, alighting from their horses, at their entrance into the first court, save only his Majestie alone, who rid along still, four noblemen laying their hands upon his steed, two before and two behind; in this manner he came till he was come to the court door, where myself stood, where he alighted from his horse, from which he had not gone ten princely paces, but there was delivered him a petition by a young gentleman; his Majestie returning him this gracious answer, that he should be heard, and have justice. At the entrance into that court stood many noblemen, among whom was Sir Robert Cecil, who, there meeting his Majestie, conducted him into his house, all which was practised with as great applause of people as could be, hertie prayer, and throwing up of hats. His Majestie had not stayed above an hour in his chamber, but, hearing the multitude throng so fast into the uppermost court to see his Highness, as his Grace was informed, he showed himself openly, out of his chamber window, by the space of half an hour together; * after which time, he went into the labyrinth-like garden to walk, where he recreated himself in the Meander's compact of bays, rosemary, and the like, overshadowing his walk, to defend himself from the heat of the sun, till supper time, at which was such plentie of pro-

* This, in itself, tells strongly against the accusations of Hume and Robertson.

vision for all sorts of men in their due place, as strucke me with admiration.'

At Theobald's, James was met by the principal officers of state, and by all the old servants and officers of Queen Elizabeth. Here also he was, for the first time, joined by the royal body-guard, that corps having been hitherto detained in attendance on the body of their late mistress, as it was the custom of England, that the guard of the monarch never transferred its services to the new sovereign, till the former had been buried.

At Theobald's, James made six of his Scotch friends members of the English Privy Council; extending the same honour, at the same time, to three Englishmen who had recommended themselves to his favour, namely, the Lords Thomas and Henry Howard, the son and brother of that unfortunate Duke of Norfolk who had perished in the cause of Queen Mary; and the Lord Mountjoy, (afterwards Earl of Devonshire), who was not only entitled to the honour from his recent proceedings in Ireland, but also from the secret friendliness of his conduct towards the King, before his accession.

To speak of Sir Robert Cecil's cost to entertain the King, during his four days residence at Theobald's, 'were but to imitate geographers,' says the narrator of the royal progress, 'who set a little round O for a mighty province; words being hardly able to expresse what was done there indeed, considering the multitude that thither resorted besides the traine, none going thence unsatisfied.'

After having put the hospitality of his secretary to this severe proof, James departed, Saturday,

May 7, and advanced towards London. 'For the number of people that went forth of the city of London to see his Majesty that day, doubtless they were contained in a number, but, without all doubt, not to be numbered. I heard many gray heads speak it, that in all the meetings they have seen or heard of, they never heard or saw the tenth man was there to be seen that day, betwixt Enfield and London, every place in this space so clogged with company, that his Highness could not pass without pausing, ofttimes willingly enforced, though more willing to have proceeded, if conveniently he could without great peril to his beloved people. After our return to our houses, a gentleman whom I know to be possessed of sufficient wealth, said he would have been willingly content to change his state, so he might have had actually every reasonable creature was there that day a bee, and a hive to put them in. Another, more reasonable than he, would ask no more living, than for every one a pin, which, according to an arithmetical proportion, by the judgment of two or three martiall people who had seen great companies together, as near as they could guess by their seeming show, would have amounted to a hundred and fifty pounds, receiving but of every one a pin. * * At Stamford Hill, the people were so throng, that a carman let his cart for eight groats to eight persons, whose abode in it was not above a quarter of an hour.' *

It was at the place last mentioned that James received the addresses of his worthy citizens of London. 'The Lord Mayor presented him with

* Savile's Account, apud Nichols' Progresses.

the sword and keys of the city, with whom were the knights and aldermen, in scarlet gowns, and great chains of gold about their necks, with all the chief officers and council of the city; besides five hundred citizens, all very well mounted, clad in velvet coats and chains of gold, with the chief gentlemen of the hundred, who made a gallant show to entertain their sovereign. * * A little way farther on, the multitudes of people in highways, fields, meadows, closes, and on trees, were such that they covered the beauty of the fields; and so greedy were they to behold the countenance of the King, that with much unruliness they injured and hurt one another; some even hazarded the danger of death.'

He thus crossed the fields to the back of the Charter-house, where he was to lodge; the multitude all the way saluting him with vehement shouts and cries, 'so that one could scarce hear another speak, and, though there was no hope to find what was lost, especially by the loser, yet many, in token of joy inwardly conceived in the heart, threw up their hats.' At this moment of peculiar excitement, when the King might be said to enter the capital, although not the city, old men, if we are to believe the loyal Saville, were heard to declare, that 'it was enough for them to have lived to see this sight.' Perhaps it was at this same moment, that a sagacious Scotsman, in attendance upon his Majesty, remarked, 'Hout awa! this folk 'ill spoil a gude king.' * He remained in the Charter-house three or four days, at the entertainment of Lord Henry Howard, whom, as already

* Wilson's History of Great Britain, p. 2.

mentioned, he had admitted into the Privy Council at Theobald's. He here dubbed a great number of knights, making in all the enormous number of two hundred and thirty-seven since he had left Scotland. *

After having reposed four days in the Charter-house, to recover from his fatigues—fatigues of the table, we may suspect, as much as of the road—he proceeded to his palace of Whitehall, from whence he took barge for the city. Having shot London bridge, and been saluted by a prodigious peal of ordnance from the Tower, he landed at that celebrated fortress, the lieutenant of which he received very graciously, even to the putting of his royal arm round the officer's neck; an acknowledgment, no doubt, of the assurances of fidelity to his interests, which Payton had transmitted to him before the demise of his predecessor. He made the round of all the curiosities of the Tower, not omitting the lions, which enjoyed his notice on many subsequent occasions. Indeed, the lions were very good courtiers, if we may believe Mr Hubbooke, the tower chaplain, who told the King, on their behalf, "Magnificae et regales bestiae, leones Anglicani, adorant leonem Scotiae, O vere de leone Judæ oriunde!" †

Such is the history of James's journey to England; an incident which, as it is by far the most remarkable in his peaceful life, and one which excites considerable interest in the imagination, we have given at the utmost length which our limits

* The expense of this remarkable journey to himself and his train, appears, from an authenticated statement, to have been 10,752*l.*

† Quarterly Review, XLI. 60.

would permit. It only remains to be remarked, in general, that the whole affair seems to have been equally agreeable to the King and to his people. He was everywhere delighted with the flatteries, the homage, and the expensive entertainments, yielded to him by his subjects: they were, on the other hand, gladdened by the advent of a monarch, whose character was good, whose progeny promised a continued and undisputed succession, and who, being of the male sex, was agreeable to them as a novelty, after the country had been governed for half a century by women. Nothing about the whole affair is so apt to astonish the modern reader, as the state in which he was received and conducted by all descriptions of public officers, especially by the sheriffs, who accompanied him through each successive county, and the extent and splendour of the hospitalities which were placed before him and the multitudes at large, at most of the houses where he lodged by the way. Hospitality is the virtue of a parcel-civilized state; yet is there something interesting to the imagination in those accounts of unlimited entertainments, where old butteries, whose hinges, as the old song says, were 'quite worn off the hooks' with age and use, and kitchens, and beer-houses, and pantries, were equally the scenes of festive enjoyment to the promiscuous populace, as the banquet-hall was to the prince himself and his nobles—the more interesting, perhaps, when we think of the desolation which overwhelmed all that was *merry* in England, in the immediate succeeding age. To a mind of sentiment, these jolly doings suggest but the idea of a broad and noble river passing smoothly and unconsciously on to the turmoil of the cataract.

CHAPTER II.

REMOVAL OF THE KING'S CONSORT AND CHILDREN FROM SCOTLAND—RALEIGH'S PLOT—SULLY'S EMBASSY—HAMPTON-COURT CONFERENCE—FIRST MEETING OF PARLIAMENT.

1603—1604.

JAMES had scarcely enjoyed his new government at London above a week, when he was annoyed by a disturbance of a domestic nature, which had just taken place in Scotland. It will be recollected, that he had left his wife and children there, with directions that they should follow him about twenty days after. Part of the arrangement, it appears, was, that the Earl of Mar should return to Scotland in time to prepare his ward, Prince Henry, for the journey, and also, it is probable, to form an escort for the royal party. The Earl not returning at the promised time, and no new directions reaching her Majesty, she resolved to go to Stirling, and request to be put in possession of the prince's person, in order that she might prepare him against the day appointed for her journey, which she was naturally anxious to keep.

Unfortunately, her Majesty had been concerned, in the year 1595, in a conspiracy with Chancellor Maitland, to get possession of the Prince's person, for some purpose touching the peace of the

nation; on which account, James had given the Earl of Mar a strict precept under his hand, upon no account to surrender his charge to any person whatever, without his express order to that effect. There was also, at this very time, a rumour in both countries, that she designed to bring her son under Popish or Spanish influence. For these various reasons, the Countess Dowager of Mar, who kept Stirling Castle in her son's absence, absolutely refused to deliver up the young Prince; so that the Queen, after a long journey for that purpose from Edinburgh to Stirling, was obliged to return without her errand, her mind afflicted at once by the mortification of this insult, and by the reflection, that she would thus be prevented for some time from seeing the land over which she and her husband had been called to preside.

Such was the agitation into which the Queen was thrown by this disagreeable incident, that she miscarried of a child with which she was then pregnant, and consequently endured a very serious illness. In the violence of her resentment against Mar and his mother, the former of whom was certainly blameable for not attending to the appointment, while the latter had perhaps uttered her refusal in no very polite terms, her Majesty wrote a letter to the King, full of angry invectives against those two personages and their servants, and upbraiding him for loving Mar better than herself. James no sooner learned what had taken place, than he despatched the Duke of Lennox with a warrant to the Earl of Mar, who had now come to Scotland, empowering him to deliver up the Prince to her Majesty; but he scrupled, for such a cause, to chide a friend of so long stand-

ing, and such approved fidelity. He wrote a letter to her Majesty, condoling with her on the accident which had befallen her, and its cause, but firmly, though mildly, palliating the misconduct of his old schoolfellow and friend. In common histories, it is generally stated, that, by way of mollifying her, he affirmed the prudence of the Earl of Mar, as having been, next to God's providence, the chief cause of his enjoying his new kingdom, and that Anne, with a true woman's spirit, remarked, that she would rather have never seen her new kingdom, than been indebted for it to that person. But, if the Queen really did utter such a sentiment in the first heat of her resentment, it is certain that she replied to her husband's letter in very different terms. Both the letters have fortunately been preserved; and as they do great honour to the feelings of both parties, and tend to refute the scandalous pasquils which have been received as testimony against James in his capacity of a husband, they are here given entire. We scarcely know any compositions of the kind which surpass them in pathos or warmth of feeling: the latter is given from the original, which is preserved among the papers of Sir James Balfour, in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, and never was before printed.

KING JAMES TO QUEEN ANNE.

'MY HAIRTE,

'Immediately before the ressaite of your lettir, I was purposed to have written unto you, and that without any great occasion, except for freeing myself at your hands from the imputation of sweareness; but now youre lettir has gevin more maitter

to wryte, although I take small delyte to meddle in so unpleasant a proces. I wonder that nather your long knowledge of my nature, nor my laite earniste purgation unto you, can cure you of that rooted erroure that any living darre speak or inform me in any wayes to your prejudice, or yett that ye can think thaime your unfriendis that are true servantis to me. I can say no more, but preteste, upon the peril of my salvation and damnation, that nather the Erle of Marr, nor any flesh living, ever informed me that ye was upon any Papish or Spanish course, or that ye had any other thouchtes, but a wrong conceived opinion that ye had more interest in your sone, or wold not deliver him unto you; nather does he farther charge the noblemen that was with you thaire, but that he was informed that some of thaime thocht by force to have assisted you in the taking of my sonne out of his handis. But as for any other Papiste or forrine practise, by God he doth not so much as alleadge it; thairefore he says he will never presume to accuse them, since it may happen well to importe your offence: and thairfore I say over againe, leave these froward womanlie apprehensions; for I thank God I carrie that love and respecte unto you, quhich, by the law of God and nature, I ought to do to my wife and mother of my children; but not for that ye are a king's dauchter; for, quhither ye were a king's dauchter or a cook's dauchter, ye must be all alike to me, being once my wyfe. For the respecte of your honourable birthe and descente I married you; but the love and respect I now bear you, is, because that ye are my married wyfe, and so partaker of my honour as of my other fortunes. I beseeche

you excuse my rude plainness in this; for casting up your birth is a needless impertinent argument to use. God is my witness I have ever preferred you to all my bairnes—much more then to any subjects; but if you will ever give place to the reports of everie flattering sicophant that will persuade you that when I account well of an honest and wise servant for his true and faithful service to me, that it is to compare, or prefer him to you, then will nather ye nor I be ever at reste or peace. I have, according to my promise, copied so much of that plotte quhairof I wrote unto you in my laste, as did concerne my sonne and you, quhich herein is inclosed, that ye may see I wrote it not without gude cause, but I desyre it not to have any secretarys than yourselfe. As for your dool made concerning it, it is utterly impertinent at this time, for sic reasons as the bearer will show unto you, quhom I have likewise commandit to impairte dyvers other points unto you, which for fear of wearieing your eyes with my rugged hande I have herein omitted; praying God, my hairte, to preserve you and all the bairnes, and send me a blythe meeting with you and a couple of thaime.

'Your awn,

'JAMES, R.'

QUEEN ANNE TO KING JAMES.

'SIR, Pleas your Majestie, I have ressavit your Majestie's letteris, the first fra Sir George Douglas, and the uther fra my Lord Duke. I thank your Majestie humblie for your four jewillis sent by my Lord Duke and the Comptroller, but mekil

mair for that loveing proof of your kyndnes in my distres, whilk hes perfytlie confirmit the assurance of your favour, whilk your Majestie has ever frā constantlie borne to me. I am infinitlie sorie for your Majesties grief and displeasour tane for my perrel and payne, and mair that I should have done any thing whilk by the report of my unfriendis could have maid your Majestie think that I had done any thing to offend your Majestie (for thas haist that hes bred my hairme and your displeasour procedit upon my earnest desyre to obey your command, and keip the day appointit be your Majestie for my removing with the prince; whais preparationes being lingerit be the delay of the Erle of Mar's hame-coming, without any certain advertisement or assurance of the tyme thairof, whan I persavit sua mekill tyme spent as thair [was] not meuch to provyde the Prince of his necessaris, I take purpous to cum to this place to see him and tak him with me, to mak him reddie agane the day appoynt, whairin being gainstaid, as your Majestie knawis, I have ressavit sic hairme, whilk grievis me not so much as your displeasour, whilk I pray your Majestie promove, and to assure yourself, that before God, nather of myself, nor be any counsel or assistance of any man levand, I movit nor did nothing that I thocht micht have offendit your Majestie; and thairfor I will pray your Majestie nather to give ear nor credit to sic fals reportis, but to persuade yourself that at meiting I sall give your Majestie perfyte contentment be the account of my proceidings, and till than and ever sall indeavour myself to obey your commandments. As to my coming to your Majestie, I sall neid na remembrancis; my greatest honour, joy, and contentment, is sua-

pendit be the delay of your presence, whilk I pray God to grant speidelie and joyfullie. My health permits me not to prefix ane certane day; but my affections sall prevent my strength in the baist of that desyrit journey to see your Majestie, whom I heartilie desyr a long, prosperous, and happy

'Your awin,

'ANNA, R.

'My hairt, for Goddis saik tak na caire nor anger, for it will reneu me payne and displesour.' *

After Prince Henry had been delivered up to her, the Queen left Scotland, with the whole of her family, and proceeded to London. Her journey was private and unostentatious, compared with that of the King; and, as she was unable, from her late illness, to travel very fast, she spent the whole month of June upon the way. The King received her and the children at Windsor Castle, with much ceremony, and great public rejoicings. On the 2nd of July, a few days after her arrival, Prince Henry was installed, as a Knight of the Garter; on which occasion, though as yet only nine years of age, he excited the admiration of the bystanders by his 'quick witty answers, princely carriage, and reverent obeisance at the altar; all which appeared very strange,' says the chronicler Howes, 'considering his tender age, and his being, till then, altogether unacquainted with the matter and circumstances of that solemnity.' This youthful prince, who cannot be said to have ever been a boy, was im-

* This in her Majesty's own hand.

mediately afterwards (July 20,) placed in a separate household of his own, with a retinue of seventy servants, 'twenty-two to be above stairs, and forty-eight below;' which number, enormous as it may appear, was doubled before the end of the year 1603, the style of living at that time involving this among many other absurd modes of waste. Charles, the younger brother of the Prince, and who was now styled Duke of York, was placed under the charge of Sir Robert Carey and his wife, being as yet too young, and too weakly a child, to be thought entitled to a separate household. It is a somewhat remarkable circumstance, that this prince, who was destined in after life to go through so many scenes of personal trouble and adventure, was at this period of his life so weak in the limbs as to be unable to walk. Carey also tells us, that he seemed so unlikely to live long, that the courtiers, who would otherwise have been but too glad to take him into keeping, all hedged off, to escape a duty which might have involved so much risk, or at least obloquy; and he himself, though by no means a scrupulous adventurer, had some qualms in undertaking the office. James, as already mentioned, never could himself walk well till he was six years of age, owing to the tainted milk he imbibed in his first year from a drunken nurse, wished to have the limbs of this unfortunate child confined in a pair of iron boots, which should at least keep them straight, though adding nothing to their powers of locomotion; but he was dissuaded from attempting so cruel an experiment. In the course of a few years, Charles attained to have a better command over his limbs than his father ever had over his, and that without having undergone any peculiar treatment

for the purpose.* As for the Princess Elizabeth, the only female child of the royal family, she was placed under the tutelage of the Lady Harrington, wife of the memorable and facetious knight, Sir John Harrington; who, in the little interval betwixt the death of Elizabeth and James's departure from Edinburgh, had bespoken his Majesty's favour by a present of a splendid toy in the shape of a dark lantern, emblematic of the demise of the late Queen; one side of which, it may be mentioned as a curious fact, contained a fac-simile of a drawing of the passion of Christ, which James's ancestor King David the First was said to have drawn on the walls of an apartment in Nottingham jail, when confined there after the unfortunate battle of the Standard.

It is a very prevailing impression, the result of imperfectly reported history, that the people of England were forcibly struck by the contrast betwixt Elizabeth and James, and, immediately after his accession, began to display symptoms of violent discontent. Nothing can be farther from the truth than this; or, at least, nothing can be more inconsistent with the testimony of private letters, and contemporary publications. If we can place reliance on these documents, and really there are no others to be resorted to for information, the people, high and low, displayed a forgetfulness of the merits of Elizabeth, which was only to be matched in degree by their adulation of her successor. According to a curious, and apparently very faithful writer of that day, the talk of the

* It is a curious fact, that Queen Anne was also carried in arms till her ninth year, from inability to walk.

people at her Majesty's funeral was the most indifferent imaginable. 'Many seemed to marvel at vain and ordinary things; as, namely, that, living and dying a virgin, she was born on the vigil of that feast which was yearly kept in remembrance of the birth of Our Lady the Virgin, and that she died on the vigil of the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady; that she departed the world at Richmond, where her grandfather King Henry the Seventh, whom she very much resembled, ended his life, and upon the self-same day of the week (!!) whereon he deceased; that she had reigned so many years; that the greater part then living had never known other prince: some also there were that spake fondly of predictions going before her death, and among others it was given out, that an old lion in the Tower, bearing her name, during the time of her sickness, pined away and died.' Even among the better informed of the lower classes, according to this writer, the remarks were by no means very favourable to her Majesty. But it was among the upper ranks that forgetfulness of Elizabeth's virtues was most conspicuous: their general behaviour during her last illness, and after her death, was either indicative of the little love in which she was held, or of their monstrous ingratitude. On the other hand, James was every where hailed by acclaiming multitudes, who seemed as if they could not find the slightest objection in their own minds to his title, but were disposed to throw themselves entirely under his feet, as rejoicing to be the slaves of such a master. The leading men of the nation paid their court to him with expressions of the warmest regard for his person. The middle ranks expressed them-

selves well pleased with his general deportment towards them, and the gracious answers he gave to their petitions. There is something, even in the enthusiasm with which the common people threw up their hats, all conscious and certain that they should never regain them, highly probative of the estimation in which his character was held. Nor was there the slightest circumstance in his conduct, after he reached London, to damp the fervour of this spirit. He has been accused of partiality for his own countrymen. But that is a mere dream of history. He was quite impartial in the distribution of his favours, so far as the nations were concerned. His having placed his children in the hands of Englishmen, is enough in itself to exculpate him from this groundless charge. But the truth is, with the exception of his making a few of his old Scottish friends members of the Privy Council, which was the very least thing he could do in reward of their services, and perhaps a necessary measure as a sort of representation of Scotland in that body, he had scarcely conferred any favours whatever on his countrymen; nor were there, indeed, many now around him, either to ask or receive extraordinary favours.

These remarks are made with a view to introduce a brief notice of what is called 'Raleigh's Plot,' a conspiracy which was detected early in July, before James had been much more than six weeks in London. That an enterprise of this kind should have been undertaken so soon after his accession, appears a circumstance so strongly indicative of national discontent, that it seemed to the writer necessary to say something to the opposite effect, as well as to remark, in anticipation, that

a more miserable effort of the insane few against the wishes of the rational many, was never devised.

This plot was scarcely so much a single and entire plot, as it was a composition of various incongruous particles of plots; the objects of the different persons concerned being of the most discordant, as well as indefinite nature, insomuch that one who endeavoured to unriddle their schemes, finished by declaring them to have had no common ground but discontent. In the first place, there were two Catholic priests, Watson and Clark, and a Catholic gentleman named Sir Griffin Markham, who proposed to present a petition to the King in favour of their religion, backed by such a multitude of their distressed brethren as would force a compliance. Then there was Lord Grey de Wilton, a young man of a fiery and generous nature, although a Puritan, who entertained much the same design in favour of his sect, but whose chief cause of discontent was the coolness with which he had been treated since the accession, on account of his having been one of the chief enemies of Essex. Next, there were some base and utterly unprincipled wretches, whose only design was to advance their personal fortunes by the designed revolution. Lastly, there was a plot almost entirely distinct from these, headed by Lord Cobham, a worthless and foolish young nobleman, and Sir Walter Raleigh; whose object was to dethrone the King, and set up his cousin Arabella Stuart; which they chiefly proposed to do by the assistance of the Archduke of Austria and the King of Spain. It does not appear that much communion ever took place among all these various individuals, before

their schemes were detected: their treasons, as Sir Edward Coke remarked on their trial, were 'like Sampson's foxes, which were joined in their tails, though their heads were severed.' Perhaps they were only beginning to coalesce when the detection took place.

The last of these fractional plots was properly the project of the second person named; for Cobham, one of those persons who are described as 'the tools which knaves do work with,' was merely the passive instrument or catspaw of Raleigh. This latter person, whose name, by a strange perversity of moral feeling, is one of the most endeared in English history, had been the friend of Cecil, and his coadjutor in procuring the destruction of Essex: after that, he was thrown off and neglected by Cecil; on James's accession, finding himself not treated with that distinction to which he had been accustomed under Elizabeth, and which had become necessary to him, he grew discontented. To increase his chagrin, the King thought it necessary to displace him from his situation as captain of the guard, to make way for a Scotch friend,* on whose fidelity he could rely; and Raleigh, although compensated for this by a pension, and although his good sense must have allowed the propriety of the King's conduct, as but a natural precaution for self-defence—as indeed a mere matter of course—retired in mortal disgust to fabricate this insane scheme of revenge. That a man of so much talent and experience should have done any thing so foolish, may well

* Sir Thomas Erskine, who had proved his fidelity by his behaviour at the Gowry conspiracy.

appear strange. But who can predicate, from talent and experience, the conduct which any man will pursue when abandoned to the guidance of passion, especially when, as in the present case, there is a stinging consciousness of having been urged by unworthy motives, in applications which have met with deserved unsuccess?

On being taken into custody, Cobham, in a fit of passion, occasioned by hearing that Raleigh attempted to sacrifice him in his examination, uttered a full confession of his designs, in which he inculpated his accomplice, or principal. Raleigh, despairing of escape, attempted to kill himself; but, afterwards conceiving better hopes, threw a letter into Cobham's window in the Tower, (pinned to an apple), disavowing what had caused the unfortunate nobleman to impeach him, and imploring him to retract his confessions, as there was no evidence to prove either guilty. Cobham obeyed this injunction, as far as he was able; but, the correspondence being detected, he was held to his original confession. At his trial, which took place in November, and was conducted at Winchester on account of the plague then raging in London, he adopted the only expedient which seemed to promise him a chance of life, that of making a confession of his guilt, and inculpating Sir Walter Raleigh. Upon that simple confession alone, and without any proof by witnesses, Sir Walter was himself tried and found guilty; a proceeding which would now be thought contrary to law, but which was declared to be perfectly consistent with it by the judges who sat on this trial. At the same time, Lord Grey de Wilton, and the Catholic conspirators, were tried and condemned, it having been

proved that they contemplated a surprise of the palace, and the seizure of the King's person.

Four of the inferior persons thus found guilty of treason were executed in the barbarous style customary in England in such cases. But Cobham, Grey, and Markham, the three of highest rank, were pardoned after their heads had been placed on the block. Sir Walter Raleigh was remanded to the Tower, where he was confined for the next twelve years; and Grey and Cobham, besides being condemned to share his imprisonment, were attainted and deprived of their estates. The last, after surviving an imprisonment of many years, lived to be refused the crumbs which fell from his wife's table, to derive a wretched subsistence from one who had once been his servant, and to die in a garret which he had to ascend by a ladder; a monument of the execration in which mankind hold that pusillanimity which will betray a friend for the sake of personal salvation, and of the degradation from which antiquity of blood and title, alliance with the mighty of the land, and the reverence generally given to greatness in distress, are all unable to save him who has first degraded himself.

One of the King's first duties in his new capacity, was to receive and entertain the Marquis de Rosni, afterwards Duke of Sully, whom Henry the Fourth sent to him in June, to attempt the formation of a league betwixt France and England (formerly agitated with Elizabeth), against the power of the house of Austria. The account which this eminent person has given, in his well-known Memoirs, of his reception at the English court, is interesting and instructive, although spoilt

in some measure by prejudices of country and character. 'James,' says he, 'was by no means so well inclined to Henry IV. as Elizabeth had been: he had been told that the King of France called him, in derision, *Captain of Arts, and Clerk of Arms.* * * * Let me add, to make him more particularly known, that he was upright and conscientious, that he had eloquence and even erudition; but less of these than of penetration, and of the show of learning. He loved to hear discourse on affairs of state, and to have great enterprises proposed to him, which he discussed in a spirit of system and method, but without any idea of carrying them into effect; for he naturally hated war, and still more to be personally engaged in it; was indolent in all his actions except hunting, and remiss in affairs; all indications of a soft and timid nature, formed to be governed.'

One of the orders which Rosni had given, preparatory to the ceremony of his audience, was, that his whole suite should be put into mourning; which seemed to be essentially necessary, as the ostensible object of his embassy was to compliment James on the death of Elizabeth. 'I had learned, however,' says he, 'at Calais, that no one, either ambassador, stranger, or even Englishman, had presented himself before the new King, in black; and Beaumont † had afterwards represented to me, that my intention would certainly be beheld with an evil eye, in a court where there was an affectation of consigning this great queen to oblivion, no mention being now made of her, and men even avoiding to pronounce her name.

† The French ambassador in ordinary.

This being the case, I should have been very glad to disguise from myself the necessity for my appearing in a dress which seemed to carry with it a reproach to the King and to all England: but my orders on this head were positive, and also highly proper; on which account I disregarded the entreaty of Beaumont, that I would defer putting myself to this expense till he had written to Sir William Erskine, and some others who best understood the ceremonial of the court; nevertheless, he wrote. He had no answer on Thursday, Friday, or during the whole day on Saturday; and I persisted in my resolution, in spite of the arguments which he continued to urge against it. On Saturday night, the very eve of the day of audience, and so late that I was going to bed, Beaumont came to tell me, that Erskine had sent him word, that all the courtiers regarded my action as a designed affront to them; and that the King would take it so ill on my part, that nothing more would be necessary to render my negociation abortive from the very beginning. This information agreeing with that of Lord Sidney, of La Fontaine, and of the deputies of the States, it was impossible for me to doubt it. For fear of a greater evil, therefore, I caused my household to change their dresses, and provide themselves with others where they could.'

All this is intended to be very severe upon James; and much has been said by the more invidious of his historians in comment upon it. But, really, when we consider the circumstances under which James stood in relation to his predecessor —her slaughter of his mother, her unrelenting tyranny over himself, her refusal to acknowledge his

title to the very last, and, above all, his final procurement of her throne by the naked virtue of his hereditary title, and the estimation in which he was held by her people, we cannot see any great crime in his forbearing to put himself into mourning for her. It is evident that this is all he can be really charged with; for there is nothing here to prove that he formally forbade court mourning, nor can the silence maintained among his courtiers regarding the late queen, be attributed to any thing else than their anxiety to consult his wishes. But there is evidence to prove that he was neither unconscious of Elizabeth's merits, nor unwilling to allow them. In his first speech to parliament after his coming to the throne, he speaks of her as 'their late sovereign of famous memory, who died full of years, but fuller of immortal trophies of honour;' and in one of his pamphlets, published two or three years subsequent to this period, he styles her 'that blessed defunct LADIE,' a phrase which we cannot well suppose him capable of using, in reference to a person whom he either hated or despised. *

Rosni afterwards gives us an account of the way in which the King entertained him and Beaumont at dinner. 'James,' says he, 'caused only Beaumont and myself to sit down at his table, where I was not a little surprised to observe that he was always served on the knee. The middle of the table was occupied by a *surtout*, in the form of a pyramid, covered with the most precious pieces of plate, and even enriched with jewels.'

Here we have another circumstance, which

* See his Works, p. 253.

has given occasion to some severe remarks on James. By some writers, who apparently have read nothing else on the subject than the above paragraph, he is shown up as maintaining an almost Oriental system of reverence towards his person among his servants. But this is purely a theory raised upon one simple fact, in consequence of the prevailing impression regarding James's notions of the royal dignity. The truth is, James was much less scrupulous about etiquette of this kind than the preceding sovereign, with whom he is, in general, so unfavourably contrasted. He discontinued the practice of kneeling, so far as his superior courtiers were concerned, which his predecessor had all her life rigorously kept up, and which, if we are not mistaken, she had established. At the very worst, the genuflexion of his attendants in serving him, though surprising to a Frenchman, was nothing more than the custom of the English court.

'The conversation during a great part of the repast,' continues Rosni, 'was on the same subjects as it had been before, (on the weather and on hunting,) till an occasion presenting itself to speak of the late Queen of England, the King did so, and to my great regret, with a kind of contempt.' [This was only conversation, and should go for little or nothing.] He went so far as to say that, for a long time before the death of this princess, he from Scotland had guided all her counsels, and had all her ministers at his disposal; by whom he was better served and obeyed than herself. [Nothing is more likely.] 'He then called for wine, which it is never his practice to mingle with water; and, holding his glass towards

Beaumont and myself, he drank to the health of the king, queen, and royal family of France. I pledged him in return, not forgetting his children. He drew towards my ear when he heard them named, and whispered me, that the next glass which he drank should be to the double union which he meditated betwixt the two royal houses. This was the first word he had said to me on the subject, and it did not appear to me that the time which he had taken to mention it was well chosen.' [Had the ambassador been aware how general was the custom in England, as it continues to be to this day, to transact important business at dinner, he would not have been surprised at this.] 'I did not fail, however, to receive the proposal with all possible signs of joy; and I replied, also in a whisper, that I was sure Henry would not hesitate when a choice was to be made between his good brother and ally, and the king of Spain, who had already applied to him on the same subject. James, surprised at what I told him, informed me, in his turn, that Spain had made him the same offer of the Infanta for his son, as the King of France for the Dauphine.'

Upon the whole, although startled a little at first by the homely appearance and manners of the King of Great Britain, this illustrious statesman allows a good deal of praise to his general demeanour. He 'speaks of him, in one instance, as expressing himself "avec la derniere politesse." James had been talking of his favourite sylvan sports, and of the French king's passion for such amusements: then, turning the discourse upon Sully, he added, says the ambassador—"que Henri avoit raison de ne pas me mener à la chasse, par-

esque si j'étois chasseur, le Roi de France ne pourroit pas l'être—Henry was right not to let me addict myself to the chase, for, if I were a hunter, he himself could not be so."' *

Rosni was not successful in the whole object which he came to negotiate. He soon found James to be of too pacific a temper to join his master in the extensive scheme of opposition which he had projected with Elizabeth against the King of Spain and the Archduke of Austria. So far indeed, was the pacific monarch from entertaining any views of this kind, that he had already resolved upon concluding the war which Elizabeth had so long carried on against Spain. Rosni was obliged to content himself with procuring James's name to a treaty for the protection of the United Provinces from the tyranny of that power.

Considerable gloom was cast upon the commencement of James's reign in England, by a pestilence which happened to break out just about the time when he reached London. Notwithstanding this calamity, which caused the death of thousands weekly, the ceremony of his coronation took place at Westminster, on the 25th of July. † Perhaps, he was induced to hasten this transaction by its appearing, from the examinations of the individuals charged with the conspiracy, that they had supposed themselves incapable of the crime of treason so long as he was uncrowned, and while as yet the oath between him and his people had not been passed.

* Quarterly Review, XLI. 57.

† Being St James's day, and one of course supposed to be propitious.

It will not appear wonderful, when the superstitious character of the age is considered, that one of the chief things noted by the public on this exciting occasion, was the fulfilment which seemed now to be given to the ancient national prophecy regarding what was called 'the Fatal Stone of Scoon.' This celebrated piece of marble, whereon, as Langtoft the Chronicler says with most amusing *naiveté*,

'Of yore the Scottyche kynges wer breechles sette,'

which had served for the coronation of the kings of Scotland, from time immemorial, till it was carried away to Westminster by Edward I., and to which was attached the well known monkish legend, declaring, that a Scottish race should inherit the land wherever it was placed, was now observed by the people, with feelings which would at the present day appear ridiculous, to be at length replaced under the sacred sitting part of a Caledonian prince, who, in the fulness of time, had been sent to prove, as that legend promised, that destiny was infallible.

The King, before, at, and after his coronation, displayed a surprising profusion in the distribution of honours to his courtiers. Cecil he created Baron Essingdon, and granted and elevated a great number of other peerages. To such a height was this carried, that a pasquil was put up in Paul's Walk, announcing an art very necessary to assist weak memories, in remembering the names of the new nobility. He was much more liberal still in the article of knighthoods, of which it is credibly affirmed that he conferred a thousand during the first year of his reign. His conduct in this matter has been unfavourably contrasted with that of Eli-

zabeth, who was amazingly penurious of honours, and never gave them without exceedingly good reason. It is said that he materially cheapened titles of all kinds. But yet there is perhaps some truth in what Baker tells us in his Chronicle, that Elizabeth was absurdly fastidious on this score, insomuch that towards the end of her reign there was sometimes a difficulty experienced in making up a sufficient number of knights for juries. To be sure, the authority of the venerable chronicler is apt to be a little prejudiced, seeing that he himself, as he is forced to tell, was one of twenty persons, who received the stroke of honour from the King at Theobald's. But, be this as it may, a peer of England, after James's reign, was a very different thing from what he had been before. Of sixty personages of this class, who existed at the demise of Elizabeth, almost all were of ancient family and title, and possessed of immense estates and territorial influence. One of them, the Earl of Hertford, left five thousand pounds a year as a jointure to his widow; the same sum which King James enjoyed as a pension from Elizabeth, and which was probably the better part of his income. In the succeeding age, when they were found to be just about doubled in number, they were also found to be reduced one half in wealth and dignity; and the poverty of the peers is generally supposed to have been the reason why so many of them engaged in the civil war.

By far the most memorable transaction in which James was engaged during the first year of his reign, was the conference which he appointed at Hampton-Court, January 1604, between the leading divines of the church and those who were

styled Puritans; a meeting over which he presided in person, and in the business of which he took an active share. It will be recollected, that the third gentleman who came to him from England after the death of Elizabeth, was one who wished to bespeak his favour for the Puritans. All the way as he passed through England, he was met by applications of the same kind, one in the shape of a petition, praying a new reformation of the church of England, which, from its being set forth as containing the signatures of a thousand clergy, though in reality there were only seven hundred and fifty, was named the Millenary Petition; under which name it is yet known in history. The objects of these petitions appear to a person, who is neither a member of the church of England nor a puritan, so unimportant, that he finds a difficulty in crediting the earnestness with which they were advanced, or the fact, that upon such trifles were grounded the discontents which ended in the civil war. The outcry of these men was chiefly against the use of the cross in baptism, the ring in marriage, and the surplice in worship; against bowing at the name of Jesus, and the use of the terms *priest* and *absolution* in the liturgy; against subscription of some of the thirty-nine articles, the frequency of marriage licenses, and the custom of baptizing children at home without a clergyman, in cases where the life of the child was imminently threatened. But, in truth, it was never from the native importance of these things that the grand dispute between the church of England and its dissenters arose; it was from the obstinacy with which the adherents and the recusants maintained the controversy in its first stages, the pride of the former

engaging them to continue an abuse which they had at one time sanctioned, and the pride of the latter as strongly disposing them to hold out against an error which they had condemned.

Although James professed that his object in calling the Hampton-Court conference was, that he might give a fair hearing to both parties, it seems certain that he had beforehand resolved against any material compliance with the wishes of the Puritans. At the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh in the preceding November, Sir Edward Coke said, that his Majesty had spoken these words in the hearing of many, 'I will lose the crown and my life, before ever I will alter religion.' He had also expressed it as his opinion, that it was more from obstinacy than tenderness of conscience that the Puritans scrupled to yield their obedience to the church. Nothing is more likely than this; for he often traversed his own deepest schemes of policy, by expressions which he unguardedly dropped in familiar conversation; being, like all other men who speak much, and for effect, liable to blurt out things which he desired to conceal.

There was something highly characteristic of James, and something, we have no doubt, greatly to his mind, in the whole of this affair. Theology was one of the subjects on which he was most learned and most fluent; and, therefore, one on which he was most anxious to converse. Indeed, it is probable that there was no other cogent cause for the conference than his own impulses towards this logical disputation, and his love of display; for there can be little doubt, that a condescension to argue with dissentients could promise no good to the church. Among sects, the practice of agi-

tating questions of doctrine, and of perpetually referring to their causes of separation, are of essential service, because they tend to keep a sort of *esprit de corps* awake in the minds of all concerned; but it is obviously the interest of the church to take the good it gets, and never appear to understand that its doctrines, or its right to get that good, have been called in question.

The conference commenced on the 16th of January, after James had spent a whole day with his own divines in preparing weapons for the contest. Surrounded by nine bishops, and as many clergymen of inferior rank, all of whom were dressed in full canonicals, he sat himself upon a chair of state, with Prince Henry on a low seat by his side: the puritan clergymen, whom he had selected for opponents, were only four in number, Knewstubbs, Sparks, Reynolds, and Chadderton, the first being professor of divinity at Oxford, and all of them members of the church of England, although more or less impugning its doctrines. Upon what principle this inequality of forces proceeded does not appear, unless it can be supposed, that, as in cases where animals of different kinds are set to combat, the King esteemed four Puritans a sufficient match for more than four times the number of High-churchmen.

A battle of trifles then commenced, in which James took an active share, sometimes displaying profound learning and acute intellect, at other times indulging in witticisms, which had certainly been better spared on such an occasion. The bishops professed themselves highly pleased with their royal auxiliary, whose eloquence was such at one particular stage of the business, that Archbi-

shop Whitgift, in a sort of rapture, declared that he certainly spoke from the divine spirit. Sir John Harrington says, in his sarcastic way, 'the spirit was rather foul-mouthed.'—'He rather used upbraiding than arguments,' continues this writer; 'told the petitioners that they wanted to strip Christ again; and bid them away with their snivilling.' Yet Egerton, the chancellor, declared he never knew the meaning of the phrase—'*Rex est mixta persona cum sacerdote*,' till he heard James giving his opinions in this oral controversy. Whatever was his demeanour, there seems little reason to doubt, that he and the divines proved nearly all the objections of the Puritans to be groundless, and the whole to be trifling, so far as it is possible to prove any thing in polemical divinity.

A specimen of his witticisms may perhaps be amusing. When Reynolds objected to the churching of women under the Jewish name of purification, James, conceiving him to be hostile to the service itself, said, that, as women were usually loath to come to church, any occasion was commendable which might draw them thither. From which, the curious fact is to be inferred, that, in James's reign, women were less addicted to church-going than men. He presently balanced this sarcasm against the sex, by a compliment which he found occasion to pay them, when a cavil was started against that most innocent phrase in the marriage-service, 'With my body I thee worship.'—"It is a manner of speech," said he, "as when we say a worshipful gentleman; and as for you, Dr Reynolds, allow me to hint, that many speak of Robin Hood before they have shot with his bow: if you had a good wife yourself, you would

think all worship and honour well bestowed on her."

The objecting ministers having expressed a wish for the revival of what were called *prophecyings*—irregular meetings for the purpose of exciting religious fervour by prayer and preaching, which Elizabeth had put down—James burst out into a fit of anger. "What!" said he, "do you aim at a Scottish presbytery? That agrees as well with monarchy, as God and the Devil. Then Jack and Tom, and Will and Dick, shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my council. No, no. Stay for seven years before you make this demand; and then, if you find me grow pursy and fat, I may perchance hearken to you, for that government will keep me in breath, and give me work enough."

After this, professing to see his supremacy aimed at in the whole of these apparently trivial complaints, he said he would tell them a tale. "When Queen Mary," said he, "overthrew the Reformation in England, we in Scotland felt the effects of it. For thereupon Mr Knox writes to the Queen Regent, a virtuous and moderate lady, telling her she was the supreme head of the church, and charged her, as she would answer it at God's tribunal, to take care of Christ his evangil in suppressing the Popish prelates, who withstood the same. But how long, trow ye, did this continue? Even till, by her authority, the Popish bishops were repressed, and Knox with his adherents brought in and made strong enough. Then they began to make small account of her supremacy, when, according to that *mere* moon-light wherewith they were illuminated, they made a further

reformation of themselves. How they used the poor lady, my mother, is not unknown, and how they dealt with me in my minority. I thus apply it. My Lords the bishops (this he said putting his hand to his hat), I may thank you that these men plead thus for my supremacy. They think they cannot make their party good against you but by appealing unto it; but if once you were out, and they in, I know what would become of my supremacy, for *No bishop, no king.* I have learned of what cut they have been, who, preaching before me since my coming into England, passed over with silence my being supreme governor in causes ecclesiastical. Well, Doctor, have you any thing more to say?"—*Dr Reynolds.* "No more, if it please your Majesty."—"Then," resumed the King, "if this be all your party hath to say, I will make them conform themselves, or else *herry* * them out of the land, or do worse."

Having thus gained or assumed the victory, James pronounced it as his firm intention to force a uniformity in church-government and worship by his Court of High Commission, and to inflict punishment on all recusants. The result of so violent a step was not so bad as might have been expected. 'Henceforth,' says Fuller, in his Church History, 'many cripples in conformity were cured of their former halting therein, and such as knew not their own minds till they knew the King's in this matter, for the future quietly digested the ceremonies of the church.' †

* *Herry*, dispossess; a word applied in Scotland to the despoliation of birds' nests.

† It deserves to be mentioned, that the translation of the Holy Scriptures at present in use was suggested at this

On the 19th of March 1604, nearly a year after the commencement of his reign, James, for the first time, met the two Houses of the English Parliament; the meeting having been postponed a considerable time on account of the plague, which was now only leaving a city where it had destroyed thirty out of a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. On this occasion, to him one of the most interesting in his whole life, he delivered a speech of considerable length, embracing almost all the feelings and ideas which might be supposed to arise to him in his new situation; a harangue which, although certainly not dignified enough in every passage for a King addressing his subjects, is said to have made a favourable impression on the nation, being full of sagacious observation and benevolent sentiment.

'Shall it ever be blotted out of my mind,' says he in this composition, 'how, at my first entry into this kingdom, the people of all sorts rid and ran, nay rather flew to meet me—their eyes flaming nothing but sparkles of affection—their mouths and tongues uttering nothing but sounds of joy—their hands, feet, and all the rest of their members, discovering in their gestures a passionate longing and earnestness, to meet and embrace their new sovereign!'

He congratulates the nation on the peace which he had now nearly secured for them, avowing, as his sincere opinion, that the non-engagement of a

conference by Dr Reynolds. James had, in Scotland, expressed to the General Assembly a desire to have the Bible translated anew, as the translation then in existence had been vitiated by its schismatic composers. He now gladly entered into the project suggested by Reynolds.

country in war was a blessing of so valuable a nature as to be worthy of being purchased at any price but dishonour. He congratulates his audience, also, on the connection which now subsisted through him between Scotland and England, asking triumphantly, if twenty thousand men be a strong army, are not forty thousand twice as strong? by which he seemed to imply, that he considered Scotland equal to England in military force. He then uses some arguments to show, that it was for the interest of both to be joined in an incorporate union.

It speaks in bitter language of the two sects who carry themselves against the established church: on the one hand, the Puritans, with their affectations of peculiarity, and their seditious sentiments in regard to civil government; on the other hand the Catholics, with their denial of his supremacy over the church, and their disposition to assassinate heretic princes. There can be no peace, he thinks, till these are quelled. Yet he allows that the Church of Rome is his mother church, and that there could be no reasonable objection to it, if it were only cleansed from some impurities. In order to counteract the baneful efforts of these men, he prays the Lords Spiritual to be diligent and exemplary. The devil, he says, is a *busy bishop*, who is always going about endeavouring to confirm men in his black creed; and it is necessary for the Bishops on earth to be equally active on the opposite score. Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, quietly remarked, that he might have here used another word.

In conclusion, he made a few remarks upon his distribution of honours and rewards among his

friends; a subject he knew to have excited no little remark, and which he might think liable to misinterpretation. Where there were so many claimants, he said, he found it difficult to perform this duty properly. 'Three kinds of things were craved of me, advancement to honour, preferment to place of credit about my person, and reward in matters of land or profit. If I had bestowed honour upon all, no man would have been advanced to honour, for the degrees of honour consist in preferring some above their fellows. If every man had the like access to my privy or bed-chamber, then no man could have it, because it cannot contain all. And if I had bestowed lands and rewards upon every man, the fountain of my liberality would be so exhausted and dried, as I would lack means to be liberal to any man.' He then acknowledges the error natural in such a case, of having distributed too much; for which he professes repentance, and promises never to do the like again. Hume has remarked the unkingly nature of this explanation; and it certainly was nothing less.

CHAPTER III.

PROPOSED UNION BETWEEN SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND—PUBLICATION OF THE COUNTERBLAST TO TOBACCO.

1604.

The chief matter which James presented in this speech to the attention of parliament, was a union betwixt England and Scotland, an object which he had sincerely at heart, and which he thought might now be conveniently effected, since the two countries were at length placed under the guidance of one sovereign, and could never again enter into war against each other. Unfortunately, for a scheme so patriotic, prejudices were entertained in both countries against it; the English fearing that part of their wealth must, in such an event, go to bring Scotland on a par with them; and the Scotch, on the other hand, dreading that their precious system of church-government would be sacrificed to fit them for a match with their Episcopalian neighbours.

The parliaments of both countries were nevertheless prevailed upon to nominate commissioners, who were to meet at London, and consider the propriety or possibility of a union. Before this meet-

ing, which took place on the 20th of the ensuing October, James so far anticipated the object of their deliberations, by uttering a proclamation, in which he declared it his will, that the names England and Scotland should be abolished, and the general name of Great Britain substituted for both. He at the same time made Scottish coins current in both kingdoms, and ordered the cross of St Andrew to take its place beside St George's in the English flag, which was therefore called the Union Jack. It is almost needless to enter into a detail of the transactions which took place among the commissioners. They finished their meetings on the 6th of December, after having settled upon articles which might be presented for the consideration of the King and parliament. But the difficulties which arose in the further progress of this measure were quite insurmountable. Notwithstanding all the anxieties of the King, and all the efforts of some far-sighted men, who, like him, could look beyond national prejudices; notwithstanding the happy wit of a popular poet, who pointed out that the ancient name of the island (Albion), seemed to indicate that they should *all be one*—a stroke not likely to be without its effect in an age when the torture of words and letters, rather than the reflection of ideas, was held for wit—the attempt to incorporate the two nations perished with the hearty consent of both.

It could not fail to be amusing to a modern reader, if we were to relate all the traits which can be gleaned from contemporary documents, of the feelings mutually borne towards each other by the English and the Scotch at this juncture; of the swaggering and affected bigness, under which the

Scotch, on the one hand, endeavoured to conceal, perhaps, the meanness of their education and circumstances; of the shameful ignorance under which the English lay, on the other hand, regarding the real situation and character of things in Scotland. Such of the Caledonians as came into England with the King, would appear to have, at the very first, begun to show in what light they held his new kingdom—to wit, as a kind of good thing, which they, as his vassals, were partly entitled to enjoy as well as himself; as only a larger sort of *spulzie*, in short, which their chieftain had secured for the general good of the clan. Perhaps this did not extend to the matter of actual depredation in more than a reasonable number of cases; but the feeling was certainly manifested in the haughty and unruly conduct which the Northerns exhibited in their intercourse with the English. To such a degree did this proceed, that, so early as the 8th of June 1603, James published a proclamation 'for the concord of the English and Scots,' declaring it his resolution to proceed with equal affection and impartiality to both nations, and desiring all officers and magistrates to do the same; the reason for such an edict being, that 'we heare of many insolencies committed by our nation of Scotland to our English subjects,' with this addition further, that 'the magistrates and justices are thought to be remiss towards such, in doubt lest the same should be offensively reported to us.'

The pasquils written at that time, setting off the present pride of the Scotch against the supposed squalor of their origin, are innumerable. Wilson says, 'the English repined to see the Scots advanced from blue bonnets to costly beavers, wear-

ing, instead of wad-meal, velvet and satin, as divers pasquils written in that age satyrically taunted at.' The exchange of *Jockey's* * original blue bonnet, 'that wanted the crown,' for a hat and a feather, is at this day the burden of a song familiar to the ears of children in Scotland, although they are of course quite unaware of the period or circumstances from which it takes its origin. † We have also the following ill-natured picture in a composition of the time.

'Well met, Jockey, whither away?
Shall we two have a word or tway?
Thou was so lousy the other day,
How the devil comes you so gay?
Ha, ha, ha, by Sweet St Anne,
Jockey is grown a gentleman!

'Thy shoes that thou wore'st when thou went'st to plow,
Were made of the hide of a Scottish cow;
They're turned to Spanish leather now,
Bedeckt with roses, I know not how.

'Thy stockings that were of northern blue,
That cost not twelvepence when they were new,
Are turned into a silken hue,
Most gloriously to all men's view.

'Thy belt that was made of a white leather thong,

* The popular epithet for a Scotsman.

† When first my braw Jockey lad cam to the town,
He had a blue bonnet that wanted the crown;
But now he has gotten a hat and a feather—
Hey, brave Jockey lad, cock up your beaver.
Nursery Rhyme.

Which thou and thy father were so long,
Is turned to a hanger of velvet strong,
With gold and pearls embroidered among.

Thy garters, that were of Spanish say,
Which from the taylor's thou stole'st away,
Are now quite turned to silk, they say,
With great broad laces fair and gay.

Thy doublet and breach that were so plain,
On which a louse could scarce remain,
Are turned to satin—God-a-mercy trayne,
That thou by begging could'st this obtain.

Thy cloake, which was made of a home-spun thread,
Which thou wast wont to fling on thy bed,
Is turned into a scarlet red,
With golden laces about thee spread.

Thy bonnet of blue, which thou wore'st hither,
To keep thy sconce from wind and weather,
Is thrown away the devil knows whither,
And turned to a braw hat and feather.'

We are afraid it would be difficult for the most thorough-paced defender of his country, to disprove that the Scots did give some little occasion for the sarcasms of the English. They were unquestionably poor, compared with the English, with whom they were at first contrasted. They were worse than that: in cleanliness, they showed ill in comparison with the more refined Southrons. Lady Anne Clifford, who visited the King at Theobald's, on his progress from Edinburgh to London, narrates, without any apparent feeling of national prejudice, that she and her companions became 'all

lousy from sitting in Sir Thomas Erskine's chamber,' * which she remarks to be a change in the fashion of the court from what she had seen in Elizabeth's time: a fact this which must be allowed to bear hard against the nation at large, notwithstanding the palliating circumstance, related by Pepys in his Diary, that in a good inn, at Salisbury, in the later age of Charles the Second, he was deposited in a bed which was in exactly the same predicament with Sir Thomas Erskine's chamber. As for the alleged insolency of the people, we are disposed to allow it in its worst degree. It must have been partly owing to their elation of mind on the score of their good fortune in attending the King to his rich inheritance, and partly assumed from an idea that they could best disguise their native poverty under a bearing of this kind.

Mr Henry Peacham, in his work called 'The Complete Gentleman, which was published in 1622, relates a story of one of the Scottish adventurers of this era, which may be thought illustrative of what is here advanced. After remarking that 'the truly valorous, or any way virtuous, are not ashamed of their mean parentage, but rather glory in themselves, that their merit hath advanced them above so many thousands better descended,' this writer instances a Colonel Clement Edmondes, a Scotsman by birth, who had attained rank in the service of the States-General, purely by dint of his own deserts. A poor countryman of Edmondes, who had newly come out of Scotland, and who was anxious to secure the good will of so influential

* Nichols' Progresses, I. iii.

a person, began to inform him, as there were some strangers present, that my lord his father at home was quite well, and that he had lately seen such and such knights his cousins, who were also in good health; thinking, no doubt, that this was the best way to ingratiate himself with a man of his order. But Edmondes interrupted him in the midst of his rhodomontade, by saying to the gentlemen present, "My friends, do not believe a word that this knave says. My father is but a poor baker of Edinburgh, who works hard for his living. The rogue makes him a lord, only to curry my favour, by making you believe me to be a great man born."

Yet, notwithstanding the jealousies and sarcasms which were expressed towards each other by Scots and English in general, it would appear that the prejudice was not of the most obdurate nature among the courtiers, many of whom matched into each other's families. The Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral of England, and distinguished in history as the conqueror of the Spanish Armada, married, for his third wife, Lady Margaret Stuart, daughter to the late Earl of Murray, and sister to the present. Sir Thomas Erskine, and also Sir John Ramsay, the two chief actors in the Gowry conspiracy, obtained good English matches. These were substantial proofs of amity.

James had amused himself, with his Queen, for some months after his arrival in England, by making progresses to visit their various palaces. He was now settled down into his usual practice of hunting; a mode of spending his time which he defended in the following ingenious manner. Hunting is necessary for my health; my health is necessary for the health of the kingdom; therefore

it is necessary for the good of the kingdom that I hunt. Under cover of this logical deduction, he made no scruple to order his council *not to trouble him with too much business.* His hunting excursions were, however, attended with inconveniences both to himself and others. The people occasionally pressed so much upon him, while engaged in the very heat of the chase, that he was obliged to give up his sport, and take refuge within his palace. This was to present him with petitions. On one occasion, (March 3, 1605,) being interrupted in the field, and compelled to amuse himself by playing cards at home, he issued out a proclamation, commanding that the people should not come to him with their petitions, except when he was going out or coming home. It is pleasing to observe him thus provide for the necessities of his subjects, while he made arrangements for his own amusement. On the other hand, his bringing a large court into parts of the country which were not accustomed to its support, caused, in that age, when provisions were collected by the royal officers at their own prices, much distress to the people. Mr Edmund Lascelles, in a letter to the Earl of Shrewsbury, (November 4, 1604,) relates what he calls 'a reasonable pretty jeast,' which was played off at Roystown in remonstrance against this grievance. 'There was one of the King's hounds called *Jowler* missing one day. The King was much displeased that he was wanted; notwithstanding went a hunting. The next day, when they were on the field, Jowler came in among the rest of the hounds; the King was told of him, and was very glad, and, looking on him, spied a paper about his neck, and in the paper

was written, "Good Mr Jowler, we pray you speak to the King, (for he hears you every day, and so doth he not us) that it will please his Majesty to go back to London, for else this country will be undone; all our provision is spent already, and we are not able to entertain him any longer." It was taken for a jeast, and so passed over, for his Majesty intends to ly there yet a fortnight." In all probability, James conceived little indignation against the author of this *jeu d'esprit*; for he had the generosity, not very common among wits, of being inclined to pardon the most palpable hits against himself, even though accompanied by disrespect towards his royal dignity, from a kind of corporation-feeling which he seems to have entertained in regard to all such matters. A very abusive satire being once read to him, he said, at various passages, that, 'if there were no more men in England, the rogue should hang for it.' At last, however, finding the author conclude with this couplet—

'Now God preserve the King, the Queen, the Peers,
And grant the author long may wear his ears!'—

he burst out a laughing, and said, "By my saul, so thou shalt for me; thou art a bitter, but thou art a witty knave." *

One of the common charges against James is, that he was too devoted a huntsman, and thus spent, in his personal amusement, much of the time which should have been given to public business. The contemporary satirists are incessant in their complaints on this score, generally

* Howel's Letters, Part I. Letter 30.

stating that he divided his time between his stand-dish and his hounds, that is, his literary and his sylvan pursuits; the former for bad weather, and the latter for good. Surely, however, some deference should be paid to his own apologies to his council, which represent his health as *requiring* the exercise of the chase; a statement countenanced by what is known regarding his originally feeble and imperfect constitution. At the worst, it is a slight fault, and one which could have no worse effect than to throw the management of the kingdom into the hands of the ministers, who were perhaps best fitted for it. It is an ill-natured sort of honesty which causes a historian to institute an inquisition into the private amusements of a sovereign; and there is really no end to the invidious remarks which discontented writers will make against better and greater men than themselves. Could any thing, for instance, be more absurd than the attempt at satire in the following passage of 'Osborne's Traditional Memorials,' one of the principal sources of the slanders which have been handed down in connection with James's name?

'I shall leave him dressed to posterity in the colours I saw him in, the next progress after his inauguration, which was as green as the grass he trod on: with a feather in his cap, and a horn instead of a sword by his side; how suitable to his age, calling, or person, I leave to others to judge from his pictures; he owning a countenance not semblable to any my eyes ever met with besides an host dwelling beside Anthill, formerly a shepherd.'

This professes to be very satirical, and ordinary readers are apt to suppose that it is effective-

by so; but, when the thing is seriously considered, the costume so severely commented on turns out to be quite the proper dress of a huntsman of high rank at the period, and the sneer at the King's features is what no well-bred person would say of another. The first absurdity is very like one committed by Sir Dudley Carleton, in a satirical account of the Mask of Blackness, wherein he remarks, that the Queen and the Peeresses, who personated Moors in that exhibition, and were of course painted black, would have looked a great deal better in their natural red and white. Mr Gifford, in his notes to Ben Jonson, ironically observes, in reference to this luminous piece of dramatic criticism, that some handsome Othello should take a hint from it, and astonish his audience by appearing some night in his native colours. Yet Sir Dudley Carleton's account of the representation of the Mask of Blackness, is one of the things most frequently quoted by modern writers in ridicule of the court of King James.

The publication of a treatise by the King, under the title of 'A Counterblast to Tobacco,' took place at this period, and has given occasion to fully as much sneering remark as any other circumstance in James's life. 'Two of his works,' says the Quarterly Review, 'the Demonology and the Counterblast to Tobacco, are a standing jest with numbers who probably never saw them. The Counterblast is a pamphlet drawn up for the people, with an occasional quiet strain of humour, and an ingenious array of familiar arguments, in a style directly opposed to pedantry, and in language for the most part as plainly English as that of Swift himself; a circumstance worthy of remark in this

and some other works of the King, considering how much he had been accustomed, during his earlier life, to write in the Scottish dialect, and how many of its peculiarities he is said to have retained in his conversation. Had the Counterblast been Green's or Decker's, it would have passed as a very pleasant old tract.' With the whole of this exculpatory pleading we cannot join, although it is in some measure just.—But it will be necessary, in the first place, to make the reader acquainted with the nature of the work in question.

The Counterblast to Tobacco was the first work which James published in England, and it appeared very soon after he had settled himself in that kingdom. It is perhaps the briefest of all his miscellaneous tracts, the first edition being comprised in only a few quarto pages. When first published, it was anonymous; and it is evident from several passages, as well as from the great freedom of language employed, that the author originally designed it to be so. But, perhaps on account of the applause it met with, he afterwards caused it to be received into the collected edition of his acknowledged works, where it cuts as strange a figure, surrounded by polemical and classical discussions, as would the picture of a Dutch drinking-scene by Teniers, if placed amidst the hermits, and saints, and goddesses of the school of Italy.

James, very probably for some reason purely physical, entertained a violent antipathy to the smell of tobacco—an antipathy which he is said to have transmitted to his son Charles I. There is a tradition in Scotland, that he ejected the clergyman of Gullan, a district in East Lothian, for the simple reason of his being an immoderate de-

bauchee in the use of this herb. It would appear, that, on his coming to England, he was greatly shocked to observe the progress which the practice of smoking had made among men of all ranks, and how much it had tended to render disgusting those domestic and convivial scenes upon whose elegance so much of the pleasure of life is dependant. Feeling the grievance bitterly himself, and thinking it must be equally so to many others—inspired, moreover, with a notion that the lives of his subjects were shortened and endangered by smoking, he immediately conceived the idea of setting forth a little anonymous *jeu d'esprit* against it. The title which he assumed for his work is a pun, the word *blast* being then used in England, as in many parts of Scotland at this day, to signify what is now technically called *taking a pipe*.

In the preface to the Counterblast, he alleges, as the cause of this vice, the great increase of wealth in England during an age of peace, which had rendered men effeminate, and compelled them to resort to improper indulgences for the sake of amusement. It is the King's part, he thinks, as 'the proper *physician* of his politicke-bodie,' [he has elsewhere described himself as 'the great *schoolmaster* of the nation,'] to be perpetually on the watch, to observe that his people do not injure themselves in any way whatever. In the present case, however, as the matter is obviously too mean to be a proper subject for animadversion by his Majesty, he thinks it right that a private person, one of the undistinguished public, should take it upon him to admonish them; and such he, as the author, professes to be. At the beginning of the work, he remarks the undignified origin or early

history of tobacco; it having been first used by the Indians for the cure of their vile diseases. It was first introduced, he says, into England by a navigator who had just discovered a large tract of country in America, and who brought, along with this strange herb, and the custom of smoking it, a few of the savage natives of that region: 'But pitie it is,' he says pathetically, 'the poor wild barbarous men died; but that vile barbarous custom is yet alive, yea in fresh vigour.' From his insinuating, in the next sentence, that the man who introduced it, was 'generally hated,'* we are led to suppose that he means Sir Walter Raleigh, to whom popular story ascribes the honour, if such it be—although Baker, in his Chronicles, tells us that the plant was first brought to the country by Ralph Lane, in the 28th of Queen Elizabeth [1586]. The true reasons of its being so favourite a regalement, are the disposition of men to patronise all fashionable novelties; and the notion, very generally diffused, that it was a *Catholicon*, or cure for all kinds of diseases. He holds up a number of arguments, grounded in the superstitious pharmacy of that time, to prove that it is pernicious to the health. 'Such,' says he, in a strain of amusing irony, 'is the miraculous omnipotencie of our strong-tasted tobacco, that it cures all contrarious sorts of diseases, in all persons, and at all times. It cures the gout in the feet; and (which is miraculous) in that very instant when the smoke thereof, as light, flies up into the head,

* Sir Walter was, in his own time, a very unpopular character. His great reputation in later times is to be ascribed to the esteem in which posterity has held his eminent abilities, his liberal principles, and his unhappy fate.

the virtue thereof, as heavy, runs down to the little toe. It helps all sorts of agues. It makes a man sober that was drunk. It refreshes a weary man, and yet makes a man hungry. Being taken when they goe to bed, it makes one sleep soundly, and yet, being taken when a man is sleepie and drowsie, it will, as they say, awake his brain, and quicken his understanding. As for curing the pockes, it serves for that use but among the pockie Indian slaves. Here in England it is refined, and will not dare to cure here any other than gentlemanly and cleanly diseases. O omnipotent power of tobacco! And if it could by the smoake thereof cast out devils, as the smoake of Tobias' fish did, (which I am sure could smell no stronger), it would serve for a precious relicke, both for the superstitious priests, and the insolent puritans, to cast out devils withall.'

Towards the conclusion of the treatise, he breaks out into several bursts of testy feeling against the object of his invective, and exhibits altogether an exacerbation of spirit, that can scarcely fail to make the reader laugh, proceeding as it does in such serious earnest, from what was after all but an accident of taste, and that in a very homely and even ludicrous matter. In one place, he gravely makes it out a kind of treason for the people to smoke tobacco, seeing that, by doing so, they disable their bodies for the service of their king and country. 'What a shameful imbecility,' says he, 'have ye brought yourselves to, that you are not able to ride or walke the journey of a Jewes Sabbath, but you must have a reekie cole brought you from the next poore house to kindle your tobacco with!' After remarking, that the proper characteristic of

a good soldier is to endure the want of food and sleep, not to speak of this vile indulgence, he asks, if, 'in the times of the many glorious and victorious battailes fought by this nation, there was any word of tobacco?' If any of you, says he to the soldiers, stayed behind your fellows on a march, in order to smoke tobacco, 'for my part I should never be sorry for any evil chance that might befall him.' He points out, as a strong reason for the abolition of this custom, its expensiveness; 'some gentlemen bestowing *three hundred*, some *four hundred* pounds a yeere on this precious stinke, which I am sure might be bestowed upon far better uses;' a statement almost incredible, unless we allow for the great quantities consumed at entertainments, and for the duty or tax, which James, by way of enforcing his literary efforts, had raised to more than six shillings a pound. 'I read, indeed,' he continues, 'of a knavish courtier, who, for abusing the favour of the Emperor Severus his master, by taking bribes to intercede for sundry persons in his master's care (for whom he never once opened his mouth), was justly choked with smoke, with this doome, *Fumo pereat, qui fumum vendidit;* but of so many smoke-buyers, as are at present in this kingdom, I never read nor heard.'

Having remarked the extreme impropriety of smoking at dinner, and mentioned the fact, that the stomachs of great smokers had been found, on dissection, to contain 'an oily kind of soote,' (which must have been a mere superstition of the day), he deplores the necessity which had compelled some men averse from smoking to take of it in self-defence, and also inveighs against the

sentiment which now generally obtained, that not to smoke with a friend was a mark of incivility, and pettishness. 'Yea,' says he, 'the mistresse [of a house] cannot in a more mannerly kind, entertain her servant, than by giving him, out of her faire hand, a pipe of tobacco.' He then points out the disagreeable change which a habit of smoking produces upon the breath; adding, 'Moreover, which is a great iniquitie, and against all humanity, the husband shall not be ashamed to reduce thereby his delicate, wholesome, and clean-complexioned wife to that extremity, that either she must also corrupt her sweet breath therewith, or els resolve to live in a perpetual stinking torment!'

'Have ye not then reason to be ashamed,' says the royal pamphleteer, in conclusion, and we must be excused for giving this paragraph in the same emphatic arrangement of type as in the original, 'and to forbear this filthie noveltie, so basely grounded, so foolishly received, and so grossly mistaken in the right use thereof? In your abuse thereof, sinning against God, harming yourselves both in persons and goods, and raking also thereby the notes and marks of vanitie upon you; by the custom thereof making yourselves be wondered at by all foreign civill nations, and by all strangers that come among you to be scorned and contemned: A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmfull to the braine, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof, neerest resembling the horrible Stygian smoake of the pit that is bottomlesse.'

Such is the celebrated Counterblast to Tobacco; and assuredly, after perusing these specimens, and giving but a glance to the general nature of the book, few readers will hesitate to join the present writer in considering it a most *outré* and most ankingly performance. True, it was originally written in the assumed character of a plebeian, expressly from a consciousness on the part of the author that it was not a subject of sufficient dignity for a king to handle. But yet, as he acknowledged it afterwards, and gave it a place in his works, that is but a slight palliation of such a monstrous offence against good taste, such a remediless violation of every thing like professional respectability. I am afraid, the Counterblast must be resigned to the laughter of those who hold James in contempt, as a most notable instance of that homely spirit by which he was so perpetually breaking down the divinity he believed himself to be hedged with. Like most of his other offences, it involved no personal baseness; and perhaps it ought to be allowed to possess merit as a *jeu d'esprit*. But nothing else can be said in its favour.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT.

1605.

JAMES had lived upwards of two years in England, enjoying all the happiness which a well-meaning prince can derive from the government of a peaceful, prosperous, and affectionate people: to use his own phrase, he had lived two years and a half of *perpetual Christmas*; when his quiet was suddenly disturbed by the Gunpowder Treason—certainly the most magnificent, as well as the most atrocious crime, ever devised within the memory of written history.

The *denouement* of this 'big black plot,' as a quaint writer of the day entitled it, was preceded by few of those scintillations or noiseless lightnings which generally foretell the bursting of such a thunderstorm both in the real and the metaphorical atmosphere. It was rather like the unpredicted earthquake, which, but one moment after peace, and sunshine, and life, and happiness, produces tumult and darkness, death and despair.

Yet the motives of the enterprise may be traced far backwards into the history of England; and, in order to see good reasons for such an attempt, we have only to call to mind the continued exer-

tions of the Catholics, on the one hand, for half a century, to restore their religion, or at least procure toleration, and the continued persecution with which government, on the other hand, persisted in visiting them. The unhappy professors of this faith, who of course were chiefly inoffensive persons in ordinary life, had, ever since the Reformation, suffered under penal laws equally revolting to justice and humanity. They had hoped for a relaxation of those statutes when James came to the throne, and also more particularly on the peace with Spain, in both of which cases they were disappointed. James was sufficiently disposed, on his own part, to befriend them, and, indeed, did make no difference, in the distribution of his favours, between the loyal of their religion, and the loyal of that which was established; but, in regard to what was by far the most prominent part of the Catholic body, those Jesuits and others, who employed themselves in secret intrigues with foreign princes against him, and who, seeking to deprive him of his ecclesiastical supremacy, advanced the doctrine that it was lawful to destroy or dethrone a heretic prince, he both talked and acted in a style of the most determined severity. It was, in reality, among these enthusiasts, and not among the Catholics in general, that the Gunpowder Treason took its rise; and to them, in particular, belongs, as a matter of course, the infamy of the transaction—if it does not rather belong to the government which, urged by the popular spirit of persecution, exasperated the whole professors of this faith by its cruelties, till these men resolved, by an act of unparalleled daring and wickedness, to

become at once the avengers of its quarrel, and the restorers of its ancient prosperity and influence.

The project in which this resolution ended, of blowing up the King and his family, and all the other members of the government and legislature, by a mine under the Parliament-House, was probably suggested by a similar plot which was set on foot nine years before, by a person of the family of Este, for destroying the Consistory at Rome; for among the conspirators there were many men whose intercourse with Italy was sufficient to make that incident familiar to them. By another conjecture, it might have been suggested by recollection of the fate of Lord Darnley, the King's father, who was blown up in the Kirk-of-Field at Edinburgh. The persons first associated in the conspiracy were five gentlemen, Robert Catesby of Ashby, in Leicestershire; Thomas Percy, kinsman * and factor to the Earl of Northumberland; Thomas Winter, and Guido Fawkes, men of good family, who had become soldiers of fortune; and John Wright, of whom nothing particular is related. All had been more or less concerned in those dark and traitorous intrigues with foreign Catholic princes which have just been hinted at, and which ended at last in this dreadful scheme; but, if there were any individual among them who conceived the idea of a mine before the rest, it would appear to have been Catesby, a descendant of the celebrated minister of Richard III., and who had long been noted as a man of designing and fanatical character. Fawkes, in his confessions, informs us that this person *propounded* the scheme to the

* The exact degree of relationship is not known.

other five; but his evidence, in some points, does not exactly consist with that of Thomas Winter. It seems to have been in spring 1604—that is, a year after the King came to England—that the project was first agreed upon by the five conspirators; at which time, the parliament was expected to meet in the ensuing February. Perhaps it should be mentioned, that Percy originally entertained a design of assassinating the King with his own hand, in revenge for the non-fulfilment of certain promises which he pretended that James had extended to the English Catholics through him; but, on his disclosing his intention to Catesby, that deeper traitor easily persuaded him to slump his own individual scheme in the general one, which had the double advantage of being more complete in its plan of avenging the Catholic cause, and more safe in execution. The project, as then laid down by Catesby, simply was, to run a mine under the House of Lords; there to deposit a proper quantity of gunpowder; to await the moment when the members of both Houses should be assembled on the first day of the parliament to hear the King's speech; and then, by setting fire to the mine, to destroy in one moment the whole assemblage, King, Lords, and Commons, comprising as it were the very flower of the nation. In the confusion which they calculated upon causing by this terrible act, they believed they should be able to remodel the church and state as they pleased; and, as they expected the two young princes to be involved in the general destruction, they designed to seize the person of the Princess Elizabeth, living at Exton with Lord Harrington, whom they

should proclaim Queen, and educate as a Catholic.

The scheme was disclosed, in its progress, to a small knot of English Jesuits, with whom the conspirators were in strict confidence—men who, having spent their whole lives in intrigues with foreign states for the restoration of their religion, had lost every sentiment of patriotism, and swamped almost all the other moral virtues in one overpowering enthusiasm. It is even supposed that Garnet, the principal of these persons, divided with Catesby the merit of conceiving the plot. Whatever share they had in its projection, it is certain they were equally active with the five laymen in furthering it.

When the scheme was settled upon, Percy took, upon lease, a solitary house in Westminster Yard, near the House of Lords, where, about Michaelmas 1604, he and three of his four associates began to dig a subterraneous passage towards that edifice, while Fawkes, the least known of all the party, kept watch without. At this time, the parliament was expected to meet on the ensuing 7th of February; and it was their intention, before that period, to have a large chamber excavated underneath the Parliament-House, wherein they should deposit the powder. The labour of digging was very severe to men who had hitherto lived so differently; but, to support existence, they had baked meats and wines brought into the vault—enthusiasm supplied the rest. They also had their arms deposited beside them as they wrought, being determined, in case of a discovery, to sell their lives as dearly as possible. Thus they proceeded with incredible diligence for about three

months, carrying the rubbish out every night, and burying it beneath the soil of the adjacent garden. At last, about Christmas, they reached the wall of the Parliament-House, which, being three yards thick, proved a serious obstacle. Nevertheless, they continued for six weeks more, picking the hard old mason-work of that structure, through which they advanced at the rate of about a foot a week. At Candlemas, about five days before the expected meeting of parliament, they had only got about half way through the wall, and were despairing of being ready in time, when, fortunately for them, the meeting was prorogued till the ensuing October.

During the progress of their labour, it was thought expedient to admit other two persons into the conspiracy, for the sake of their assistance in digging; namely, Christopher Wright, brother to John Wright, and Robert Winter, the brother of Thomas. Previous to being made privy to the project, they were bound to secrecy under the following oath, which was administered by Garnet, along with the communion:

'You shall swear by the blessed Trinity, and by the sacrament you now purpose to receive, never to disclose, directly nor indirectly, by word or circumstance, the matter that shall be proposed to you to keep secret; nor desist from the execution thereof, until the rest shall give you leave.'

One day, as they were busied in their excavations, they heard a rushing sound, such as is made by a pile of coal which has fallen forward, and which seemed to proceed from the inner side of the wall. Afraid lest they were discovered, they grasped their arms, and prepared to stand

to their defence. But, no farther symptom of detection taking place, they gradually recovered from their alarm, and sent Fawkes, the sentinel, to ascertain the cause of the noise. He soon returned, with information that it proceeded from a cellar under the Parliament-House, in which a large quantity of coal was at present in the progress of being sold off, and that, after the coal should be sold, the cellar was to be let to any one who might chuse to take it; the familiar system upon which all things were established in that age being such, that the vaults under the Assembly-house of the English senate, were let out for the meanest purposes, and probably for sums too trifling to be named. * They instantly formed the resolution of giving up their work, and taking this cellar. Fawkes was commissioned to do so in the name of Percy, whom he professed to be his master; and the ostensible use he proposed to put it to, was that of serving as a coal-cellar for the house which had been previously taken, and in which they were now carrying on their operations. When this was done, they gladly resigned their labours, which, but for the fanaticism that prompted them, must have been intolerable. They at the same time took an opportunity of conveying the stores of wood and gunpowder which they had provided for the mine, from a yard at Lambeth, on the other side of the Thames, where they had hitherto been kept, to the

* It is observable, from the records of the Town-Council of Edinburgh, that in the latter part of the fifteenth century, there were twelve booths or shops in the lower part of the Tolbooth or Town-house—a structure which occasionally gave accommodation to the Parliament of Scotland.

cellar, which could now afford them accommodation. Thus, they gained the double advantage of saving themselves a great deal of labour, and of having the tools they worked with brought into a smaller space. There was also this advantage in the cellar, which they might have wanted in the mine, that it was immediately under the royal throne, and therefore most likely to secure the principal object of the conspiracy.*

On the prorogation of parliament, they thought proper to retire into the country, lest, by lingering out the intermediate time in the house, without visible business, they might become liable to suspicion. Fawkes, commissioned by the rest, went over to Flanders, to arrange matters with a number of English Catholic refugees, for an invasion of the country to take place after the explosion. In July, while the rest were absent, Percy caused an additional quantity of powder to be deposited in the cellar. He and Catesby, about the same time, had a meeting at Bath, where it was arranged, that for the sake of raising money, of which they were in need, the latter should take into the conspiracy whatever wealthy men he might think fit; and thus were admitted, Sir Edward Digby, a gentleman of twenty-five years of age, who seems to have been amiable in every other respect, but his accession to this plot, and Mr Francis Tresham, a respectable country gentleman; the former promising fifteen hundred pounds towards the general fund, and the latter two thousand. Percy had already promised four thousand pounds out of the Earl of Northumberland's rents, to be

* Somers' Tracts, ii. 101.

realized when the next payments came into his hands.

As the parliament was now expected to sit down on the 5th of October, the conspirators assembled in London towards the end of September, and finally prepared their mine, by changing such of the powder as they supposed might have become damp, and making up the whole to thirty-six barrels, large and small, being in all the weight of nine or ten thousand pounds, which they covered over with large beams of wood and iron, to increase the effect, and with faggots and lumber, to give it an innocent appearance in the eye of the public. There were now in all twenty-two persons acquainted with the dreadful design; yet, such was the common enthusiasm which bound them, and such the impression of those awful religious rites under which they had received the secret, that hitherto no one had either relented in his purpose, or breathed a whisper of it to any unconcerned person. As yet, these extraordinary men, most of whom were hitherto guiltless of the slightest offence cognizable by law, contemplated, without a feeling of compunction, the prospect of destroying thirty thousand of their fellow-creatures, (for such was the number expected to perish); and they who, in general life, would have scrupled to inflict the least wound on an individual, were induced, by the mistaken but irresistible zeal of religion, to lay a whole nation, as it were, desolate. One scruple eventually rose in the mind of the father of the plot: It struck the mind of Catesby as a dreadful thing, that many Catholics would necessarily be involved in the same destruction with the Protestants; and he put it as a case

of conscience to Garnet, 'Whether, for the good and promotion of the Catholic cause, (the necessity of time and occasion so requiring,) it be lawful, or not, among many nocents, to destroy and take away some innocents also?' The Jesuit, with the sophistry proverbially ascribed to his order, replied, that it certainly was lawful so to do, provided that the good to be obtained thereby were greater than the evil to be procured by saving both; instancing, as a similar matter of expediency, that an army advancing to besiege a town is not to be prevented from resorting to the usual modes of attack by the fear of injuring a few friends who may be among the besieged. Catesby was content with this solution, and further scruple arose not.

While they were rejoicing, with the joy of fanaticism, in the near approach of the fatal day, Parliament was once more prorogued—till the fifth of November—being for the third time. This was so unusual, that they feared it to be occasioned by a discovery of their design; and, on the day when the commission of prorogation was read in the House, they mingled with the crowd, to mark if any trace of what they apprehended could be read in the countenances of the commissioners. No symptom appeared: the commissioners walked and conversed together, after the ceremony was done, over the very spot where the powder was deposited. The conspirators retired, with re-assured minds, to the country, to spend the intermediate month.

At the end of October, having again assembled at London, the arrangements were once more placed by them on the same footing as at the end

of the preceding month. To each was assigned some particular duty or place. To Fawkes, as the most expert and most daring, was assigned the task of firing the mine. He was to mark the proper hour for doing so by a pocket-watch, with which, though then a rare article, he had provided himself. Half an hour before the crisis when the assemblage was expected to be fully met, he was to ignite a match which should take that space of time to burn; and then, getting on board a vessel stationed for him on the Thames, he was to set sail for Flanders, where he was to publish a defence of the plot, endeavour to procure the favour of the Catholic princes, and, as soon as possible, send over a supply of men, arms, and ammunition. Immediately after the explosion, as the Duke of York was not expected to be present, Percy was to enter the palace by virtue of his character of gentleman-pensioner, and carry off the person of that member of the royal family, under the pretence of conveying him to a place of safety. Tresham, Digby, and others, were to seize the Princess Elizabeth at Exton. Catesby was to proclaim her as Queen at Charing-Cross, with a protector during her minority. Various measures were taken for conveying early intelligence of the event to remote districts, where insurrections were to be expected. For the ecclesiastical members of the plot, who scrupled to act in it personally, was assigned a place on an eminence near Hampstead, from whence they could gratify themselves with a distant view of the explosion. This spot is, to the present day, appropriately termed *Traitors' Hill*. It was also provided, that, on the morning of the fatal day, they should take mea-

sures for preventing a certain number of the Catholic peers and members from attending the House. The number comprehended all whom they judged it to be prudent to tamper with.

It would almost seem, from the apparent inevitability of the explosion at this stage of the narrative, as if there were some truth in what Guy Fawkes said after its detection, that God would have concealed it, but the Devil disclosed it. Various theories have been started, as to the way in which it was discovered; as, that Henry IV. of France learned some particulars of it, which he disclosed to James; that the Earl of Salisbury, (lately Sir Robert Cecil), being at the bottom of it, also brought it to an ecclaircissement, and so forth. But, after all, the only feasible account of the matter is that published officially at the time, and universally accepted, which was in substance nearly as follows:—

On the evening of Saturday, the 26th of October, eleven days before the meeting of Parliament, Lord Mounteagle, (son of Lord Morley, but himself a peer by inheritance from his mother), when about to sit down to supper, received a letter from one of his footmen, which the man said had been delivered to him by an 'unknown man of a reasonable tall personage,' as he was crossing the street on an errand with which his lordship had just commissioned him. This was in Mounteagle's lodging, in one of the streets of London. The young nobleman, having broken open the letter, and found it to be written in a somewhat cramp hand, caused one of his domestics to read it to him aloud; when it was found to be literally as follows:—

'My lord out of the love i beare to some of youere frends i heave a caer of youer preservaceon therefor i would advyse yowe as yowe tender yower lyf to devyse some excuse to shift of youer attendance at this parleament for god and man hath concurred to punishe the wickednes of this tyme and think not slyghtlye of this adverteament but retyere youre self into youre contri wheare yowe may expect the event in safti for thonghe theare be no apparance of anni stir yet i saye thaye shall recyve a terribel blowe this parleament and yet they shall not see who hurts them this cowncel is not to be contemned because it may do yowe goode and can do yowe no harme for the danger is passed as soon as yowe have burnt the letter and i hop god will give yowe the grace to mak a good use of it to whose holy protection i commend yowe.'

This letter was addressed on the back, 'To the Right Honourable the Lord Mow'teagle;' but it was without date and subscription. Lord Mountteagle was of course much puzzled what to make of its mysterious contents. His first impression was, that it was what in modern phraseology is called a *hoax*, to prevent him from attending parliament; but he afterwards conceived, probably from the firm though inelegant language in which the epistle was expressed, that it was of sufficient importance to be laid before his Majesty's Secretary of State. Accordingly, without regard to the lateness of the hour (seven), the discomforts of a winter night, or, what would appear to have then been the chief obstacle, the darkness of the streets of London, he walked immediately to the

palace of Whitehall, where he delivered the mysterious document to the Earl of Salisbury.

Cecil, having read the letter, gave Lord Mounteagle thanks for having brought it to him; not, he said, because there seemed to be much meaning in it, but it might refer to a design which, he had heard, was entertained by the Catholics, of presenting a petition to the parliament this session, so well backed that the government should be unable to refuse it. Such was the mysterious language, in all probability, which some of the conspirators held on the subject among their friends, and in which Cecil had already received some information regarding the plot from abroad. This wily statesman said no more at the time to Lord Mounteagle; but, immediately conveying the letter to the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain, he began to consult with that officer regarding its meaning, which both at once conceived to refer to an explosion of gunpowder, to take place while the parliament was assembled.* It has generally been thought strange that the truth was thus pitched upon so quickly, seeing that the letter was written in the darkest language, and the idea of an explosion of gunpowder under the Parliament House was not abstractly an obvious one. Yet, if the letter be very attentively perused, it will be found that the mind is naturally led by the language to this conclusion, or at least, recondite as it is, can hit upon no other.

Before making any resolution upon the subject, Cecil thought proper to take the opinion of other

* Letter from the Earl of Salisbury to Sir Charles Cornwallis, Winwood's Memorials.

three members of the council, the Earls of Nottingham, Worcester, and Northampton; all of whom agreed with him in thinking the letter not unworthy of attention. It was determined, however, by the whole five, that it might be advantageous to make no stir about it for a few days, both to let the supposed plot ripen, and that they might then have the opinion of the King, who was to return from the hunting at Roystoun on Thursday, and whose 'fortunate judgment in clearing and solving of riddles' was well known to them. Accordingly, on Friday next, the day after his Majesty arrived in town, the Earl of Salisbury presented it to him in his gallery, without any other preamble than a relation of the manner in which it came into his hands.

James read the letter, paused, read it again, and then remarked, that this was a warning by no means to be despised. This could be no pasquil, he said, no mere attempt at bringing Lord Mounteagle into a ludicrous situation; the style was too pithy and emphatic, too sincere, to be interpreted in that sense. Salisbury called his Majesty's attention to one particular sentence, 'The danger is past as soon as you have burnt the letter,' which he thought could only be the composition of a madman or a driveller; for, if the mere incremation of this frail sheet could avert the apprehended mischief, what need of the warning? James, however, was of opinion that that clause ought to be interpreted in another sense, that the danger would be as sudden and speedy in execution as the burning of a sheet of paper in the fire; and he therefore conjectured that it was by gun-

powder under the House of Lords that the Parliament was to receive such 'a terrible blow.'

Salisbury, who considered James 'an *understanding prince*, if any we ever had,'* was much struck by his reasoning on this subject, which, though not coincident with his own, led to the same conclusion. He left him, however, for that time, without proposing any measures of security, but rather 'with a merrie jeast, as his custome was;' † and it was not till after a second consultation with the four Earls, that he next day condescended to allow, before the King, that there was any necessity for such proceedings. It was then agreed between them, in presence of the Lord Chamberlain, that the latter officer should, in accordance with the duties of his office, institute a search through the apartments under the Parliament House; though not till the evening before Parliament was to assemble, in order that the plot, if any such existed, might be discovered at its very ripest. Perhaps it should here be mentioned, that the honour of unriddling the letter, which we have given to King and minister severally, is claimed exclusively by each—by Cecil in his well-known letter to Sir Charles Cornwallis, and by King James in his authorized relation—but that, if James had been informed by Cecil that he and Suffolk had also thought of gunpowder, no claim would have been made for him higher than the honour of having also done so, though in the second instance. ‡ At the same time, it must be

* So he terms him in a private letter.

† Narrative in James's Works.

‡ Several writers, not observing what is here pointed out ---- unmercifully at the King for supposing himself

allowed, against the merit claimed by the King, that, although the interpretation put by him upon the principal sentence of the letter, was a fortunate one, it could not be the true one: for it seems evident that the writer merely meant, by it, to induce Mounteagle to burn the letter, in order to put himself out of all danger from being privy to a conspiracy.

By a singularly fortuitous circumstance, the conspirators very soon learned that the letter had been sent to Mounteagle. The domestic who had read it to his Lordship at table, having a friendship for Thomas Winter, called upon him next evening; told him that such a letter had been received; that Mounteagle, suspecting a plot, had instantly laid it before Salisbury; and entreated that, if he were concerned in any such enterprise, he should immediately abandon it, and fly from London. While the man was in his presence, the conspirator affected to treat the matter lightly; but he was no sooner alone, than he set out for Enfield Chase, and communicated what he had heard to a meeting of his associates. They were much alarmed at the intelligence, and some even proposed to give up the adventure; Catesby, however, insisted upon sending Fawkes to London, 'to trie the uttermost;' declaring that, if he were in the shoes of that person, he would not scruple to go forward. Fawkes went and came safe back, declaring that he had found every thing as it was; which again elevated their spirits. They had a meeting

to have been the detector of the gunpowder treason. Such he really was, notwithstanding that other two persons, unknown to him, had pitched upon the same idea before him.

at Barnet on Friday, when, by general consent, Tresham was taxed with the guilt of having written the letter; which, however, he denied. On Saturday, the very day when it was agreed by the King and ministers to make a search, Tresham met Winter in Lincoln's Inn walks, with information that Salisbury had shown the letter to the King; on which Winter counselled Catesby that all should be abandoned; Catesby now consenting to this, it was resolved only to wait till next day, in order to take Percy with them. On Sunday, however, Percy prevailed upon them to reverse their resolution, and remain where they were. He himself meanwhile went to the country, to a seat of the Earl of Northumberland.

On Monday afternoon, the search was made, as designed, by the Lord Chamberlain, accompanied by Whinyard, keeper of the King's wardrobe, and by Lord Mounteagle. After inspecting several of the lower apartments and vaults, they came to that in which the conspirators had deposited their powder, which they found stuffed full of faggots, billets, and coal, together with some old furniture. The Chamberlain asked Whinyard for what purpose this apartment was kept, and was informed that it was let to Thomas Percy, the occupant of the neighbouring house, for a coal-cellar. Then casting his eye around the place, he observed a tall man standing in a corner—the demon Fawkes—who, on being questioned what he was, described himself as Percy's man, at present employed to keep the house and cellar in his master's absence. Here Lord Mounteagle, who had accompanied the party, privately informed the Chamberlain, that he could not help

suspecting Percy to be the writer of the letter, recollecting, as he did, his suspected religion, and an old friendship which might have induced him to give him this warning.

Notwithstanding this hint, Suffolk left the vault as he found it, but not till he had made an accurate, though apparently a very careless inspection of the place and its contents. On reporting what he had seen to the King and his little party of councillors, and acquainting them moreover with Mounteagle's suspicion, they felt themselves distracted between a desire of taking every precaution for the safety of the King's person, and a fear lest any search they might make would be found vain, and only draw upon them the ridicule of the public; all agreeing, however, that there were now more shrewd causes for suspicion than before. After this question had been discussed for some time with considerable anxiety, James decided them at last in favour of a search; but proposed that it should be conducted by a mere Justice of the Peace, and under pretence of inquiring for some hangings, lately missed out of the wardrobe; by which means, they might avoid giving offence to the Earl of Northumberland, Percy's kinsman and employer, and also save themselves from the proper consequences of the hoax, if such it should turn out.

Towards midnight, therefore, Sir Thomas Knyvett, a gentleman of the King's bed-chamber, and who was at the same time one of the justices of Westminster, proceeded with a small party of soldiers to the Parliament-House; leaving the King and his band of councillors to await the result in the privy gallery of Whitehall. Meanwhile,

Fawkes, alarmed by the afternoon visit of the Chamberlain, but still resolved to run every risk, spent the evening in the vault, making the necessary arrangements for the explosion. Having just completed these preparations, he had quitted his den of latent sulphur, and was standing in front of the door, booted as for a journey, when Knyvett came up with his party, and took him prisoner. Then pushing forward into the vault, and turning over a few of the faggots, the party discovered one of the smaller barrels of powder, and eventually the whole thirty-six. There being no longer any doubt as to the conspiracy, a gentleman was sent up to a chamber where Fawkes was disposed, in order to search and bind his person. The monster made great resistance; griped the gentleman's left hand so violently as to provoke him to draw his dagger, which, however, he did not use, from the wish of procuring an organ of evidence; and when tripped up, and thrown upon the ground, where all the paraphernalia of matches, tinder-box, and dark-lantern, were taken from his person, he exclaimed in an agony of disappointed enthusiasm, that he wished he had had time to ignite the train, and thereby spend upon himself and his captors the engine of destruction, intended for a much larger and more important company.

Knyvett lost no time in communicating intelligence of his discovery to the Chamberlain, who immediately burst in a transport of joy into the place where the King and his councillors were assembled, exclaiming that all was found out—all was safe. The amazement of the company, when the contents of the vault was described, it would

be difficult to imagine. Fawkes was in the meantime brought up to a neighbouring apartment, to await an examination before the King, who had resolved not to go to bed till he should learn more of the plot. While standing there, an object of horror beyond all parellel, some one had the curiosity to ask him if he were not sorry for 'his so foul and heinous treason.' He answered, in the language of Scævola, that he was sorry for nothing but that it was not performed. Being reminded that he would have involved many of his own persuasion in the same destruction, he replied, that a few might well perish to have the rest taken away. To one of the King's countrymen, who asked him what he had intended with so many barrels of gunpowder, he answered, that it was to blow the Scotch beggars back to their native mountains. He was told that he should suffer a worse death than the assassin of the late Prince of Orange; but he rejoined, that he could bear it as well. Every expression indicated a character of singular energy, and that his purpose was still warm upon his mind. He often repeated, when the hopelessness of pardon was spoken of to him, that he should have merited it if he had accomplished his design. On torture being mentioned, he said, he would suffer ten thousand deaths rather than accuse his master or any other. He had been the sole projector of the enterprise, as he was to have been its sole executor; and for that, if such was his destiny, he was willing to render his existence.

His behaviour before the Privy Council, which which was immediately assembled in considerable number, may be given in the King's own words. 'Notwithstanding the horror of the fact, the guilt

of his conscience, his sudden surprising, the terror which should have been stricken in him by coming before so grave a council, and the restless and confused questions that every man did vex him with, yet was his countenance as farre from being dejected, as he often smiled in scornful manner, not only avowing the fact, but repenting only his failing in the execution thereof, whereof (he said) the devil and not God, was the discoverer; answering quickly to every man's objection, scoffing at any idle questions that were propounded unto him, and jesting with such as he thought had no authority to examine him. All that day could the Councill get nothing out of him touching his complices, refusing to answer to any such questions which he thought might discover the plot, and laying all the blame upon himself; whereunto he said he was moved only for religion and conscience sake; denying the King to be his lawful sovereigne, or the Anoynted of God, in respect he was a hereticke, and giving himself no other name than John Johnston, servant to Thomas Percy. But the next morning,' adds the King, 'being carried to the Tower, hee did not there remaine above two or three dayes, being twise or thrise in that space re-examined, and the racke only offered and shown unto him, when the maske of his Roman fortitude did visibly begin to wear and slide off his face, and then he did begin to confesse part of the truth. * * *'

The amazement and agitation into which the public was thrown by this extraordinary discovery, went beyond all precedent; and long before day the streets were crowded with people, all anxiously inquiring for the circumstances.

The behaviour of the conspirators, after their de-

signs were discovered, was that of men who, rather than be baulked in a gratification which they have long and anxiously expected, will submit to the most desperate risks, and hazard death itself, rather than lose even the last relic of a once glorious prospect. Such of them as were in London at the time, fled to the country, taking with them a few horses, some of which they had stolen during the night from a riding-master. Having reached the rendezvous at Dunsmoor, long before any intelligence of the conspiracy, they there attempted, with their companions, to raise a Catholic insurrection. Every effort, however, was unavailing. When they found themselves unsuccessful in the first instance, they proceeded rapidly through Warwickshire and Worcestershire, calling upon every one whom they thought likely to join them. But the King's proclamations roused the sheriffs in pursuit, before they had raised two score of men; and, after a harassing journey, or rather flight of three days, they threw themselves into Holbeach House, on the borders of Staffordshire, the seat of Stephen Littleton, one of their adherents; where they were scarcely housed, before the sheriff of Worcestershire appeared before them, and summoned them to surrender. They were at first very confident; told the officer that he would require a greater company to take them; and prepared with great coolness to defend themselves from the expected attack. But as they were drying a small quantity of gunpowder before a fire in their chamber, a spark flew out and set fire to it; by which the roof was blown off, and Catesby, with other conspirators, so much scorched as to be almost unable to fight. It was remarked as strange

that they thus suffered by the same instrument which they designed to use for the destruction of others. * The house now beginning to take fire, they were obliged to resolve upon sallying forth among the sheriff's company, as their only remaining chance of escape. On their opening the door to do so, instead of their getting out, the sheriff's men rushed in, and that in such a strong tide as to put escape out of the question. They then began a desperate fight in the court-yard. Catesby, Percy, and Winter, placing themselves back to back, stood for some time, magnanimously contending against a host of inferior foes. At last a man of the name of Street, belonging to Worcester, loaded his piece double, and, laying it deliberately over a neighbouring wall, killed Catesby with one bullet, and mortally wounded Percy with the other. Winter, previously wounded in the belly with a pike, was at the same moment taken prisoner by a man who came behind and threw his arms around him. As Rookwood, Grant, and all the other principal conspirators were by this time brought down, the rest submitted without further debate.

All the survivors of this fray, together with a few others, such as Everard Digby and Garnet the Jesuit, who were taken elsewhere, were soon after brought to London to stand trial. Culprits more odious to their fellow-countrymen never perhaps

* A much larger quantity of powder, which lay in a bag near the other, was tossed by it into the court-yard, without taking fire; and the people further took notice, that only enough was ignited to scorch them; whereas, if the larger quantity had exploded, none could have survived to give an account of the plot.

were apprehended in England. As they passed along, the people flocked around them with eager curiosity, but shrunk as quickly back from the sight of a set of countenances, whereon they conceived, in their horror, that the Almighty had set a stamp indicative of supernatural guilt. The King at first desired to see them on their examination; but, hearing that their visages were, as one of his courtiers expresses it, the most terrible ever looked on, he said he felt himself sorely appalled at the thought, and chose rather to be absent.* Whatever were James's sensations upon the subject in general, and we may easily conceive them to have been by no means of a tranquil nature, he surprised the public very much by the moderation with which he talked of the plot, four days after its discovery, at the opening of parliament. While the whole country was ringing with execrations of the Roman Catholics, James then made it his endeavour to show, that the whole profession ought by no means to be blamed for the conspiracy, but only the few desperate individuals who were already detected as guilty in it. This strange conduct was partly owing, perhaps, to a candid and rational interpretation which he put upon the plot, but more, in all likelihood, to the fear in which he stood all his life of incensing the Papists beyond bounds.

It seems unnecessary to follow these unfortunate men through all the details of their trial and execution. Suffice it to say, that, during both, they generally conducted themselves with the same hardened spirit which had led them through the

* Letter of Lord Harrington of Exton.

dreadful enterprise itself. The King, who had previously ordered the 5th of August to be observed as a holiday an account of the Gowry treason, added the more noted 5th of November to the list, where it has ever since remained—though we may be permitted to observe the time has surely now arrived, when all such memorials of the strife of party in the early periods of our history should perish. *

* The Earl of Northumberland being suspected, and afterwards found guilty, of a certain degree of accession to the Gunpowder treason, through his kinsman Percy, was fined in L.30,000, and confined for many years in the Tower.

CHAPTER V.

VISIT OF THE KING OF DENMARK—QUARRELS WITH PARLIAMENT.

1606—1610.

For some years after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, the tenor of James's life was marked by no incident of great importance, while the history of the country is almost equally barren in matters of interest. Having, in 1604, concluded the war with Spain—on poor terms for England, it was said—he and the country had now settled down into the full enjoyment of his favourite maxim, *Beati pacifici;* a peace little disturbed during the remaining twenty years of his life. One of the charges against James is, that he compromised the honour of his country by truckling to inferior continental states, for the sake of preserving the peace he loved so much; and he is generally compared to the coward, who, for failing to give one good blow when it is needed, subjects himself to an endless series of injuries and affronts. We should not fail to observe, however, amidst all the ridicule and censure thrown upon the King for this reason, the grand decisive fact, which stands so boldly out in his favour, that, during his

whole reign, the country was in a condition perhaps the most prosperous—the most truly happy it had ever known. Without forgetting how much of this was owing to the excellent reign of Elizabeth, we should allow a proper proportion of merit to the benevolent and moderate government of King James; and by no means forget that, without the peace which he secured for the nations he governed, they never could have enjoyed the benefits wrought out by his predecessor. In estimating the character, moreover, of a peaceful monarch, much may well be allowed for the poor figure which his doings make on the pages of contemporary history, as contrasted with those of more warlike sovereigns; for, while every stroke struck by the military adventurer receives ample commemoration and praise, scarcely a sentence is ever, by any chance, allowed to the widely-diffused domestic happiness, the advance of commerce and the arts, and the increase of all the elegancies of life, which have been secured by the man who has had the wisdom to abstain from war. It is a very observable circumstance in favour of James's government, that the only miseries complained of by the people during the time it lasted, were of a metaphysical kind. The non-conformist, for instance, found himself a little distressed, because he was obliged to yield a verbal obedience to the rules of a church he dissented from; the Parliament found reason to remonstrate against the theoretical maxims of arbitrary rule occasionally spouted to them by the King, and generally grumbled a good deal —as all Englishmen, be they rich or poor, *will* do, about taxes—when he addressed them for a subsidy; the Catholic population felt the weight

of the penal laws severely, though it is evident that James would have remitted them but for the prejudices of the country; the modes resorted to for raising money to the Court, were also, in many instances, violent and irregular. Yet, in spite of the complaints of Papist and Puritan, in spite of all the evils of monopolies, patents, purveyance, and forced loans—the result rather of long established system, than of the King's personal tyranny—the nation revelled, absolutely revelled, in all kinds of luxury and comfort, and was never, at any period of its history, before or since, more worthy of the epithet *Merry England.* One fact will speak volumes in favour of this assertion: it was in this reign that a taste for the *fine arts* first began to creep into the public mind. But, indeed, the absence of all complaints on the part of the common people, and the existence of all kinds of luxury among the upper ranks, are so evident on the face of the annals of this reign, that there is little need for any formal attempt to prove what has been stated. Perhaps the religious and political evils, which formed the only subject of complaint at the period, and which afterwards occasioned the civil war, only add to the general testimony in favour of their contentment as to temporal matters; for, in an industrious community, it is only after a man has placed himself at his ease in regard to the affairs of this world, that he becomes irritable on account of matters merely spiritual.

One fact seems abundantly certain—that James, with all his puerilities of character, and all his exalted notions of the royal prerogative, was nevertheless very much beloved by his people. This was testified in a very remarkable manner, on the

29d of March 1606, when a report arose in the city that he was assassinated at Okingham in Kent, while hunting, the instrument used being a poisoned knife, and the assassin a Papist. The effect of such a rumour on the public mind, excited as it had been by the recent plot, is described in very strong language by Arthur Wilson. 'The Court at Whitehall, the Parliament and City, took the alarm, mustering up their old fears, every man standing at gaze, as if some new prodigy had seized them. Such a terror had this late monstrous intended mischief imprinted in the hearts of the people, that they took fire from every little train of rumour, and were ready to grapple with their own destruction before it came. In the midst of this agony, there came assurance of the King's safety, which he was enforced to divulge by proclamation, to re-establish the people.' When James came to town next day, he was received by the inhabitants with transports of joy, and a welcome which might be termed enthusiastic. Quite touched by their expressions of affection, he told them, in his usual kindly manner, that a *better* king they might perhaps have got by his death, if it had taken place; but he was sure they never could have got one who loved them better, or had their interests more sincerely at heart.

'The summer of 1606 was distinguished by an event of some importance in James's domestic life —a visit from his brother-in-law, Christiern IV., King of Denmark. Ever since the Queen had quitted her native country in 1589, she had seen none of her relations. It may therefore be supposed that, at this time, after having been seventeen years out of their sight, and when she had

become the mother of three children, and the queen of many realms, it must have been with no ordinary feelings that she received this visit from her brother. Christiern came in a huge and most magnificent ship, accompanied by some smaller ones, and cast anchor at Gravesend on the 16th of July. He is described as having been a young man, 'of goodly person, of stature in no extremes, in face so like his sister, that he who hath seen the one may paint in his fancy the other. He was appareled in black, cut out on cloth of silver; about his hat he wore a band of gold, wrought in form of a crown, and set with precious stones.' James was at Oatlands when he heard of his brother-in-law's arrival; but he lost no time in sailing down the river to meet and give him welcome. The meeting took place under circumstances of formality and grandeur suited to so august an occasion. Having dined in the cabin of Christiern's vessel, and spent a night on board, James accompanied him next day up the river to Greenwich, where the Queen lay at present, confined to her chamber, in slow recovery from a recent accouchment, or bewailing the misfortune of having lost her infant on the second day of its existence. It was remarked, as the vessel was proceeding, that the river had not before borne two sovereigns at once on its bosom, since Henry VIII. received the Emperor Charles V. James politely allowed precedence to the Danish king on all occasions, and kept him in general at his right hand, saying, when Christiern remonstrated against this deference, that he must be absolutely obeyed in his own country. The meeting of the royal brother and sister was of the tenderest kind. All

the evening of this day (Friday), and all the next, were spent in repose, and in feasting. On Sunday, they attended sermons and devotional exercises in the early part of the day, and feasted in the afternoon on a dinner, which, strange to say, was served up to the sound of drums, trumpets, and other music—'the which moved his Highness to much delight.' This day having been spent, as we are informed by a contemporary writer, 'in God's praises and their comfort,' they hunted on Monday in Greenwich Park; and in the afternoon, 'their High Estates,' says the same writer, 'went to Eltham, a house of his Majesty, some two miles distant from the court, where, in the park, they hunted with great leisure, and killed three bucks on horseback, being followed with many companies of people, which, in their love, came to see them.' Here a circumstance occurred, which seems highly probative of the good esteem in which James was held at this period. A great many of these people, says the simple chronicler of the Danish king's visit, * 'not used to follow such pleasures as hunting, especially on foot, thought not on their paines; but in the joy of their hearts (which no doubt was pleasing to them), they endeavoured, with all their power, to follow after their horses, as never wearied in so royall company, thinking themselves most happy (of many others) to behold so rare and excellent a sight, two kings and a prince; and surely, in the opinion of many, their royal persons might take great care to heare their continual cries to God for his blessing, and to preserve them,

* Nichols' Progresses, Part 6.

their states and dignities, from all mallice and traytors' practices for ever. The sun going neare his place of rest, their pleasures finished, and they returned themselves to the court, all the way pacing easily, that the people might better obtain their desires in beholding them.'

It is curious to observe, in the minute accounts given by contemporary writers of the visit of the King of Denmark, that, for curiosity in seeing sights of this kind, the citizens of London were nearly the same as in our day. The following description of the reception which they gave the two kings, on their progress from Greenwich to Theobald's, might almost be supposed a quotation from some recent number of the Morning Post, regarding the advent of a potentate of our own time.

Thursday, July 24, 'the morning being faire, every man in his place gave his attendance. The barges waited for their Majesties, who, about 11 o'clock, came aboard them, accompanied with the prince (Henry), and were rowed to Blackwall, where their coaches with their train attended their coming, with such multitudes of people as were not to be numbered. At the landing of his Highness, the merchants' ships that anchored in the road then discharged such a peal of ordnance as gave great contentment to that royal company. Thence they set forwards the way that leadeth to Stratford, and so to Theobald's, twelve miles distant from London, a famous and most delightful house of the Right Honourable Earl of Salisbury, all the way met with great company of people, which saluted them and prayed for their happiness, but most especially until they came three or

four miles from London; all which way was so replenished with men and women of good sort, some on foot, some on horseback, and some in coaches, that there was hardly way left for their royal company to pass them; such is the love of this nation to the King and his lovers and friends; and in their love, their desires so great to behold their delights, that no paine whatever but they esteem as pleasure to enjoy it, especially to behold so honourable and heavenly a sight, two anoynted kings and so royal a prince, whom God in his great mercy evermore preserve and keep from all traitorous practices and other evils. 'Amen.'

But there was one circumstance in this progress, which could scarcely have happened in the present day. 'Before these royal persons came neat the house of Theobald's, there was strewed in the highways abundance of leaves coloured green, cut like oaken leaves, on every one of which was written, in large Roman letters of gold, "WELCOME, WELCOME;" which being presented to their Majesties, they praised the device, and found their welcome to them and theirs as great as was spoken of.'

They were entertained for four days at Theobald's, in a style of extravagance which gives a strange view of the manners of the age; the intellectual pleasures arising from the hearing and seeing of Ben Jonson's classical devices, and from the survey of the splendid gardens and other decorative objects which surrounded the house in all directions, being mingled, it would appear, with sensual delights of the grossest nature, especially that of drinking to excess. Sir John Harington,

in a letter written from the spot, has given a most picturesque and amusing account of the scene.

'MY GOOD FRIEND,

'In compliance with your asking, now shall you accept my poor account of rich doings. I came here a day or two before the Danish King came; and from the day he did come, till this hour, I have been well nigh overwhelmed with carousal and sports of all kinds. The sports began each day in such manner and such sort, as well nigh persuaded me of Mahomet's paradise. We had women, and indeed wine too, of such plenty as would have astonished each beholder. Our feasts were magnificent, and the two royal guests did most lovingly embrace each other at table. I think the Dane hath strangely wrought on our good English nobles; for those whom I could never get to taste good liquor, now follow the fashion, and wallow in beastly delights. *The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to rolle about in intoxication.* In good sooth, the parliament did kindly to provide his Majesty so seasonably with money; for there have been no lacke of good living; shews, sights, and banquetings from morn to eve.

'One day, a great feast was held, and, after dinner, the representation of Solomon his temple, and the coming of the Queen of Sheba, was made, or (as I may better say) was meant to have been made, before their Majesties, by device of the Earl of Salisbury and others. But alas, as all earthly things do fail to poor mortals in enjoyment, so did prove our presentment thereof. The lady who did play the Queen's part, did carry most precious

gifts to both their Majesties; but, forgetting the steps arising to the canopy, overset her caskets into his Danish Majestie's lap, and fell at his feet, though I rather think it was in his face. Much was the hurry and confusion; cloths and napkins were at hand, to make all clean. His Majesty then got up, and would dance with the Queen of Sheba; but he fell down, and humbled himself before her, and was carried to an inner chamber, and laid on a bed of state, which was not a little defiled with the presents of the Queen, which had been bestowed upon his garments; such as wine, cream, jelly, beverage, cakes, spices, and other good matters. The entertainment and show went forward, and most of the presenters went backward, or fell down; wine did so occupy their upper chambers. Now did appear in rich dress, Hope, Faith, and Charity. Hope did assay to speak, but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew, and hoped the King would excuse her brevity: Faith was then alone, for I am certain she was not joined to good works, and left the court in a staggering condition. Charity came to the King's feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed; in some sort she made obeisance and brought gifts, but said she would return home again, as there was no gift which heaven had not already given his Majesty. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick, and spewing in the lower hall. Next came Victory, in bright armour, and presented a rich sword to the King, who did not accept it, but put it by with his hand; and by a strange medley of versification, did endeavour to make suit to the King. But Victory did not triumph long; for, after much,

lamentable utterance, she was led away like a silly captive, and laid to sleep in the outer steps of the antichamber. Now did Peace make entry, and strive to get foremost to the King; but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants; and, much contrary to her semblance, rudely made war with her branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming.

'I have much marvelled at those strange pageantries, and they do bring to my remembrance what passed of this sort in our Queen's days; of which I was sometime an humble presenter and assistant: but I never did see such lack of good order, discretion, and sobriety, as I have now done. I have passed much time in seeing the royal sports of hunting and hawking, where the manners were such as made me devise the beasts were pursuing the sober creation, and not man in quest of exercise and food. I will now in good sooth declare to you, who will not blab, that the gunpowder fright is got out of all our heads, and we are going on hereabouts as if the devil was contriving every man to blow up himself, by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance. The great ladies do go well masked; and indeed it be the only show of their modesty, to conceal their countenance. But alack! they meet with such countenance to uphold their strange doings, that I marvel not at ought that happens. The lord of the mansion is overwhelmed in preparations at Theobald's, and doth marvellously please both Kings, with good meat, good drink, and good speeches. I do often say (but not aloud), that the Danes have again conquered the Britons; for I see no man, or woman either, who can command herself.

I wish I was at home: "*O rus, quando te aspiciam?*" And I will before Prince Vaudemont cometh.' *

Whatever is reprehensible in this conduct, must be placed to the account of the King of Denmark alone, and not to that of King James; for the latter, although by no means a Mahometan in regard to wine, was not at all remarkable for this vice. The truth is, the humour of the Danish monarch in favour of deep potations, infected the court, and became, for the time, the reigning folly; James himself giving into it, with his usual good nature, although by principle abhorrent of habitual drunkenness. There is something classical in the bacchanalian propensities of the King of Denmark; Shakespeare is supposed to have been induced, by what he saw of them in England, to write the following well-known passage in Hamlet, and also to describe the usurper in that celebrated drama as a drunkard—

> 'This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
> Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations;
> They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
> Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
> From our achievements, though performed at height,
> The pith and marrow of one attribute.'

Some of the facts recorded regarding his intemperance, are calculated to astound the senses of men in this comparatively sober age. Howell, the letter-writer, tells us of a feast which his Majesty once gave to the English ambassadors at his own court, which lasted from eleven in the day till the evening, and during which he drank thirty-five healths in as many cups of good Rhenish; yet,

* Nugæ Antiquæ, Ed. 1804, i. 348, *et seq.*

though at last carried away in his chair, he was out at the hunting, next morning, by break of day. On one occasion, when greatly elevated by liquor, he told his servant to ask any gift to the value of half his kingdom, and it should be given him: the man, 'finding his master so beastly out of tune, demanded only a great pair of stags' horns; for which, in admiration of so moderate a request, the King bestowed on him three thousand dollars.' * While in England, by pure dint, it would appear, of that sway which a mind inspired by any violent enthusiasm always exercises, more or less, over those around it, he prevailed upon his soberer brother-in-law to enter into competition with him as a drinker; and they had frequent trials of strength in this inglorious warfare. At Theobald's, if we are to believe the somewhat questionable authority last quoted, his Britannic Majesty was carried off from table in the arms of his courtiers, and not without great difficulty deposited in bed. And to such an excess was the prevailing evil carried among the courtiers themselves, that, according to the same authority, one was found dead on the table after supper, the wine running out of his mouth.

On one of the evenings of the royal entertainment at Theobald's, this young Bacchanal had nearly fallen into mortal quarrel with the Earl of Nottingham, the famed conqueror of the *soi-disant* invincible armada. It had pleased this ancient nobleman, as already related, to marry, for his third wife, the youthful and blooming Lady Margaret Stuart, daughter of that Earl of Murray so

* Payton's Divine Catastrophe of the House of Stuart

famed in Scotland for his good looks and his unfortunate end, and who was, of course, cousin to the King. The addled brains of the King of Denmark were tickled at the idea of an old man married to so young a wife; and, encouraged perhaps by the character of the Earl—for his Lordship was an arrant coxcomb—he could not help, in the course of their carousals, making certain allusions, which at once touched the honour of the wife, and offended the vanity of the husband. The wrath of the latter was appeased at the time, probably by the mediation of the King; but not so the indignation of the Countess. She, having learned what took place, lost no time in writing the following letter to the Danish ambassador; a composition worthy of herself and her ancestors.

'SIR—I am very sorry this occasion should have been offered me by the King your master, which makes me troublesome to you for the present. It is reported to me by men of honour, the great wrong the King of Danes hath done me, when I was not by to answer for myself; for, if I had been present, I would have letten him know how much I scorn to receive that wrong at his hands. I need not urge the particular of it, for the King himself knows it best. I protest to you, Sir, I did think as honourably of the King your master, as I did of my own prince; but I now persuade myself there is as much baseness in him as can be in any man: for, although he be a prince by birth, it seems not to me that he harbours any princely thought in his breast; for, either in prince or subject, it is the basest that can be to wrong any woman of honour. I deserve as little that

name he gave me, as either the mother of himself or of his children; and if ever I come to know what man hath informed your master so wrongfully of me, I shall do my best for putting him from doing the like again to any other: but if it hath come by the tongue of any woman, I dare say she would be glad to have companions. So, leaving to trouble you any further, I rest, your friend,

'M. NOTTINGHAM.'

Who, on reading this letter, doth not imagine that he hears in it the voice of the blood of Murray?

The visit of the King of Denmark was extended above three weeks, in an almost uninterrupted series of grand entertainments, one of which was afforded by the city of London. On Sunday the 10th of August, James and the Queen, together with the Prince of Wales, conducted their guest to Rochester, where they dined on board one of the Danish vessels. It would seem that his Majesty of Denmark had one other extravagant taste, besides what is above specified—one for hearing discharges of cannon. Being conducted on Sunday afternoon to a wind-mill hill near Upnor, he was there regaled with one thousand and eight peals of shot from the vessels lying in the river; 'which made such musicke in his ears,' says a letter of the day, 'that he told the King, if he had spent half his kingdom in a banquet, he could not have contented him so well; and further, that, in requital, he gave himself and his heart to do the King, so long as he lived, all friendly offices both in word and deed.' If the King of Denmark was rendered thus sentimental by cannon-shot, he of Great Britain was rendered equally polite by

his brother-in-law's professions. He answered, that 'never any man was so welcome to him as the King of Denmark, nor ever should any—till he came again.'

Next day, the royal party dined on board the Admiral, or principal ship of the King of Denmark, a vessel of prodigious size, and great splendour of decoration; its galleries, for instance, being all gilded. Besides the royal family, only fifty persons were present, and those of the first distinction. Here again his Danish Majesty's taste for shot was gratified abundantly; for 'at every health there were, from the ships of Denmark and the forts, some three or four score great shot discharged; and of these thundering vollies there were between forty and fifty. You would have thought,' says this quaint old writer, 'that Jupiter had been of the party.' About four in the afternoon, the King of Denmark presented to the King of Great Britain a beautiful and well-contrived fire-work,' * * * which, 'very methodically, continued burning and cracking for the space of three quarters of an hour. Which being consumed, the Kings, with tears in their eyes, took their leave.'

The visit of this northern monarch affords a dreadful instance of the profusion, or rather, it may be called, the utter disregard of the proper uses of money, which, at this period of his life, began to characterize King James. It is credibly affirmed that he spent, on this month's debauch, in entertaining a personage who was not politically of the least account to him, the greater part of a subsidy lately granted to him by Parliament, to the amount of four hundred and fifty-three thou-

sand pounds, which he had obtained for the professed purpose of oiling the wheels of government, and for which, perhaps, he had bartered to the donors, some of the most valued privileges of his crown. A sword, alone, which he presented to King Christiern at parting, cost seventeen thousand pounds! On the other hand, it must be allowed that all this was in conformity with the spirit and customs of the age. The Danish King was almost equally profuse with himself. He bestowed thirty thousand dollars on the servants of his brother-in-law's court; fifteen thousand on those below stairs; ten thousand to the officers above stairs; and the remaining five thousand to the equerry, or stabler. To every person of the King's and Queen's bed-chambers, he gave jewels of value. On the Queen herself he bestowed his picture richly set with precious stones. To Prince Henry he gave his second-best ship, which, with all her furniture, was not worth less than twenty-five thousand pounds; with a rapier, besides, worth two thousand marks. He also distributed a great deal of money amongst the sailors. This was, indeed, the peculiar age, when the absurd customs of systematic present-giving, and of vails to servants, were at their height—when bribes could be offered to judges under the accredited semblance of gifts, and the King himself reckoned upon the new-year donations bestowed upon him by his courtiers, as a considerable and indispensable part of his revenue.

For some years subsequent to this period, we find James engaged in a ceaseless round of amusements—in hunting, in making solemn progresses through the country, in witnessing the perform-

ance of Ben Jonson's masques, and in attending the feasts of the city of London. The flowery joys of this part of life were not, however, without some disturbance: the machinations of the Catholic seminarists, who were still active in the country, formed a sort of girdle of spikes, to annoy his flesh beneath all his external splendours. We find, with some surprise, that he could not venture to dine with the Lord Mayor of London, in the Clothworkers' Hall, without previously sending officers to ascertain that no Popish plot lurked in the cellars below. He was also obliged, occasionally, to relax the penal laws against this unhappy body of Christians, purely that he might enjoy the sports of the field without the fear of being assassinated.

Soon after the detection of the Gunpowder Treason, he had framed, what was then for the first time known in the country, an oath of allegiance, to be tendered to all classes of his subjects, so that he might distinguish those who were willing to pay him obedience as their temporal prince, from such of the Catholics as believed him to be deposed by the dictum of the Pope. The measure was attended with complete success in the first instance; for most of the Catholic population accepted the oath, including Blackwell their High Priest, and it met with no resistance but from the Jesuits and other machinators. The Pope, however, soon after directed a couple of brieves to his English adherents, earnestly calling upon them to suffer all pains rather than sacrament their souls to damnation by complying with a heretic King. James then published an anonymous defence of the oath, to which Cardinal Bellarmine and others wrote replies; and, presently, a tremendous controversy

took place between the King of Great Britain and the chief defenders of the Catholic faith abroad. He afterwards extended his work considerably, acknowledged it as his own, and, prefacing it with what he called 'a premonition to all Christian Princes,' sent a copy, splendidly bound, to be presented by his various ambassadors to each of the sovereign states. As might have been expected, Spain, Venice, and other states under the control of the Pope, were obliged to mortify the royal author by refusing to accept this present—however earnestly it advocated their independence of the Roman Pontiff.

It would appear that James was now beginning to feel the advance of age, and to take less delight than formerly in violent exercise. 'The King,' says a court letter of date November 29, 1607, 'is indifferently well pleased with his hunting; and, which is as great news as ease, is not so earnest, without all intermission or respect of weather, be it hot or cold, dry or moist, to go to his hunting and haulking as he was; for though he be as earnest, being at it, as he was, yet is he more apt to take hold of a let; and a reasonable wind will blow him to, and keep him at mawe all day.' He thus seems to have felt, at forty-one, the indifference towards out-of-doors amusements, which a modern poet has placed at a somewhat latter period of life—

'And blessed the shower which gave me not to choose.'*

In April, 1608, a great revolution was wrought in his cabinet by the death of the Earl of Dorset, who had been Lord Treasurer since a late period in

* Crabbe—*Tales of the Hall.*

the reign of Elizabeth, and the accession of the Earl of Salisbury to the vacant place. To the latter personage—whom, partly on account of his being a small crook-necked man, and partly for his acuteness of scent in ascertaining all kinds of plots both at home and abroad, James entitled his *Beagle*—we soon after find his Majesty writing the following amusing and most characteristic letter from Bletsoe, the seat of Lord St John, where he was upon a progress. The date is August 5th, the anniversary of the Gowry Conspiracy.

'My littill beagill; Ye and your fellowis thaire are so proud, now that ye have gottin the gyding againe of a feminine courte in the olde fashion, as I know not how to deal with you; ye sitte at youre ease and directis all; the newis from all pairtis of the worlde comes to you in youre chamber; the Kingis resolution dependis upon your posting dispatches; and quhen ye list ye can (sitting on your bedde-sydes), with one call or quhisling in youre fist, make him to poste nichte and daye, till he come to youre presence. Well, I know Suffoke is maried, and hath also his handis full now in harbouring that great littill proude man that comes in his chaire; but for your pairt, master 10, † quho is wanton and wyfeles, I cannot but be jealous of your greatnes with my wyfe; but most of all ame I suspicious of 3, quho is so laitelie fallen in acquaintance with my wyfe, for besydes that the verrie number of 3 is well lyked of by weomen, his face is so amiabill as it is able to intyse, and his fortune hath ever bene to be great with she-saintis; but his part is foule in this,

† The figures indicate words not deciphered.

that, never having taken a wyfe to himself in his youth, he can not now be content with his gray haires to forbeare ane other mannis wyfe. But, for expiation of this sinne, I hoape that ye have all three, with the rest of youre societie, taken this daye ane eucharistike cappe of thankefulnes for the occasion quhiche fell out at a time quhen ye durst not avou me. And heir hath beene this daye kept the Feast of King James's deliverie at *Saint Johnstone*, in *Saint John's house*. All other maitters I referre to the old knave the bearer's reporte. And so faire you well.

'JAMES, R.'

During the year 1610, James experienced a great deal of annoyance from a parliament, which he called in February, for the purpose of placing his revenue on some settled plan. The necessity under which the Kings of England have always lain, of begging subsidies from the House of Commons, is perhaps the chief reason why the French of the last age believed *Le Roi d'Angleterre* to be the same as *Le Roi d'Enfer*; and there can be no doubt that, while this has been the main pull whereby the people of England have wrought out their liberties from the hands of the monarch, it has also given the monarch, on many occasions, too good reason to resort to violent measures against the subjects, for the purpose of keeping himself upon the throne, and sustaining his dignity in a style worthy of the nation. The case of King *versus* Parliament, in the time of King James, was simply this: The King felt it necessary to assemble a parliament, for the purpose of imposing lawful taxes; the parliament, when assembled

would only give subsidies, on condition that the King should resign in their favour a proportionate part of his prerogative. Then, the King, being sensible that he could not conduct the government with less power than he had, refused to make the proposed bargain, dissolved the parliament, and was obliged, for his subsistence, to sell away the crown lands, to impose fines on recusants in religion, and, by his bare proclamation, inflict the levying of what were called *benevolences* on his subjects; all which measures, of course, tended to render him unpopular, and to pave the way for the civil war.

Inspired, as we are persuaded, by the best of motives, he attempted, in the present parliament, to barter a great number of the more odious of his privileges, for a settled income of L.200,000 a year, which he believed would have the effect of settling the limits of the respective powers of king and parliament on just grounds. The Earl of Salisbury stated the proposal to the House of Commons, to whom he at the same time communicated the agreeable intelligence, that, since his accession to the Treasury, two years before, he had paid off L.900,000 out of L.1,300,000 of debt, which he then found against his Majesty, part of which had been incurred during the reign of Elizabeth. The two great powers of the nation then began to adjust their bargain; the Commons bringing up all possible grievances (some of them quite fantastic) for redress, and endeavouring all they could to cheapen down the King from the sum he had demanded; while he, on the other hand, stood stiffly out in favour of some of the privileges which they attempted to lop off from.

his crown, and adhered pertinaciously to the round sum which they wished to reduce. On their proposing to give him nine score thousand pounds, he told them 'in pleasant language,'—for his good humour scarcely ever forsook him—that he had a great dislike to that sum, 'as referring to the number of the Muses, whose followers were always beggars; eleven score thousand he would best have effected, that being the number of the apostles (Judas being left out); yet, as a medium, he was contented with ten score, that being the number of God's commandments, which tend to virtue and edification.' Hume observes, that this pleasant conceit was, for its goodness, the best paid wit that ever was in the world; for it actually moved the Commons to vote L.200,000, as the revenue to be settled on the crown. It was not, however, till after many months of violent contention with their sovereign, that they came to this agreement. The following extract from a letter written by him to his Privy Council, on the 7th of December,* will show that he at last completely lost his temper in the dispute, and formed the wish of managing his government without their assistance, through the agency of his council. '* * * We would have wished that our councillors and servants, in the Lower House, had taken more heed to any speech that concerned my honour, than to keep to the refusal of a subsidie; for such bold and villanous speeches ought ever to be crushed in the cradle! And as for the fears they had, that that might have moved more bit-

* From Hinchinbrook, the seat of his loyal friend Sir Oliver Cromwell, where he was upon a progress.

terness in the House, not only against themselves, but also to have made the House descend into some further complaints, to our great disliking; we must to that point say thus farre, that we could not but have wondered greatly what more unjust complaint they could have found out, than they have already, since we are sure that no house but the *House of Hell* could have found so many as they have already done! But as for my part, we should never have cared what they complained against us, so that lies and counterfaite inventions be barred. Only we are sorry of our ill fortune in this countrye, that having lived so long as we did, in the kingdom where we were borne, we came out with an unstained reputation, without any grudge in the people's hearts, but for wanting of us. Wherein we have misbehaved here we know not, nor we can never yet learn; but sure we are, we may say with Bellarmine in his book, that in all the Lower Houses these seven years past, especially these two last sessions, *ego pungor, ego carpor*. Our fame and actions have been tossed like tennis-balls among them, and all that spite and malice durst do to disgrace and infame us, hath been used. To be short, this Lower House, by their behaviour, have perilled and annoyed our health, wounded our reputation, emboldened all ill-natured people, encroached upon many of our privileges, and plagued our purse with their delays! It only resteth now, that you labour all you can to do that you thinke best to the repairing of our estate.' * * *

It must have certainly been at this period of his reign, that James threatened to send a horse, which would not obey him, to the five hundred

kings who sat in the Lower House of Parliament —telling the animal that *they* would be sure to bring down his pride, and curb his unruliness. Such sparts as these, however, were merely things of a moment; and, whatever was the real annoyance which the monarch experienced from the collision of his *principles* with the *conduct* of the House of Commons, he was too good-natured to cherish any permanent enmities against them. He could always revenge himself by a joke; and that was, to him, revenge enough.

CHAPTER VI.

KING JAMES IN MIDDLE LIFE.—ANECDOTES.

It may now be proper to devote a chapter to such personal notices and anecdotes of the King, as are chiefly applicable to this period of his life, and cannot well be introduced elsewhere.

To begin at the beginning.—The countenance of the King is described, by a foreigner, * as being, at this period of his life, 'of a fair and florid complexion, and lineaments very noble to behold.' His carriage was still undignified, on account of the weakness of his limbs; and, in walking into a room, he was still under the necessity of shambling along the walls for support, or leaning on the shoulders of his courtiers. The increased fulness of his beard, and a certain degree of corpulence, had now filled up the outline of a face and figure which originally appeared somewhat meagre and shabby; so that, upon the whole, he looked a great deal better now than in youth;—a fact proved by the series of his portraits. Wilson, who

* Cardinal Bentivoglio.—See Aiken's Court of King James, ii. 331.

saw him at this period of his life, and was by no means disposed to flatter him, says, that 'in the whole man he was not uncomely.'—'He was of a middle stature,' says Sir Anthony Weldon, 'more corpulent through his clothes than in his body;' for, to defend himself against the daggers of the Papists, which threatened him all his life, he caused his doublets to be 'quilted for stiletto proofe,' and his nether garments to be fashioned in great plaits and full stuffed. His hair, according to Weldon, was of a light brown till towards the end of his life, when it became tinged with white. Sir Theodore Mayerne, his physician, has recorded, with professional minuteness, 'that his head was strong, and never affected by the sea, by drinking wine, or riding in a chariot; that in moist weather, and in winter, he had usually a cough; that his skin was soft and delicate, but irritable, and, when he vomited, it was with such an effort, that his face would be sprinkled with red spots for a day or two; that he never ate bread, always fed on roast meat, and seldom or never ate of boiled, unless it was beef; that he was very clumsy in riding and hunting, and frequently met with accidents; that he slept ill, waked often in the night, and called his chamberlains, nor could sleep be again readily induced, unless some one read to him; that he was passionate, but that his warmth quickly subsided; that he had naturally a good appetite, and a moderately fair digestion; that he was very often thirsty, drank frequently, and mixed his liquors, being very promiscuous in the use of wines, though generally preferring those which are called sweet.'

By Weldon we are informed, that James 'was very temperate in his diet, and not intemperate in

his drinking. It is true,' says this writer, 'he drank very often; but it was rather from a custom than any delight; and his drinks were of that kind for strength, as frontiniack, canary, high-country wine, tent wine, and Scottish ale; so that, had he not been of a very strong brain, he might have daily been overtaken, although he seldom at any one time drank above four spoonfuls, many times not above one or two.'—'The King,' says another writer (Roger Coke *) 'was excessively addicted to hunting and drinking, not ordinary French and Spanish wines, but strong Greek wines; and though he would divide his hunting from drinking these wines, yet he would compound his hunting with these wines, and to that purpose he was attended by a special officer, who was, as much as he could be, always at hand to fill the King's cup in his hunting when he called for it. I have heard my father say, that, being hunting with the King, after the King had drunk of the wine, he also drank of it; and, though he was young, and of a healthful disposition, it so disordered his head, that it spoiled his pleasure, and disordered him for three days after. Whether it were drinking these wines, or from some other cause, the King became so lazy and unwieldy, that he was treist [trussed] on horseback, and as he was set so he would ride, without poising himself in the saddle; nay, when his hat was set on his head, he would not take the pains to alter it, but it sate as it was put on.'

Other particulars, as minutely personal, are given by various writers. He never washed himself—

* Detection of the Court and State of England.

not even his hands, probably from that irritability of skin mentioned by Mayerne: only, to avoid utter uncleanliness, he used to rub the ends of his fingers in a wet napkin. His eyes, which were large, he was in the habit of rolling about, in a strange manner, especially after any stranger had entered the room; the result, probably, of his constant fear of assassination. Many persons, as we are informed by Weldon, were unable to endure the scrutiny of his eye, and left the room, 'as being out of countenance.' The largeness of his tongue, or rather perhaps the narrowness of his jaws, which caused him to drink in an unseemly manner, imbibing the liquor as if he had been eating it, is a fact already alluded to. It is one of the most curious contradictions in his character, full as it is of all kinds of cross-lights, like the manor-houses of his time, that, though delighting in fine dresses worn by others, he used to wear very plain clothes himself, and often retained them till they fell to rags. Above all, although fond of seeing new fashions of clothes upon his courtiers, he disliked having the fashion of his own attire changed. Weldon tells us, that, a person bringing him one day a hat of a new Spanish block, he cast it from him, swearing he neither loved them nor their fashions. Another person, on another occasion, bringing him roses for his shoes, he asked, 'if they would make him a ruffe-footed dove,' and contented himself with a sixpenny ribbon. So constant, indeed, was he in all minor matters of this kind—in diet, in exercise, and dress, that a courtier was wont to say, 'if he were asleep some years, and then awakened, he could tell where the King had been every day, what dishes

he had had at table, and what clothes he had worn.'

It is a circumstance by no means inconsistent with James's general character, that he had a great number of *antipathies*. The three chief were, swine's flesh, ling, and tobacco. He is reported to have once said, that, if he were to invite the devil to dinner, he would give him a pig, a pole of ling with mustard, and a pipe of tobacco for digestion.* It is very remarkable, that no mention is made in any contemporary work, of the antipathy most notoriously ascribed to him by tradition—that which he cherished against the sight of a drawn sword. It is, indeed, clear that he never carried a sword himself (though no fashion of the age was more indispensable in a gentleman), and that, when about to confer the honour of knighthood, he always borrowed the necessary weapon from a bystander. We can also remember having once seen an anecdote—though not in an authentic work—that he was so unable to handle a sword from excessive nervousness, as to have once run it into the eye, instead of laying it on the shoulder, of a candidate for equestrian honours. But still, as such a peculiarity of constitution is nowhere mentioned in a work of the day, and as an instance of his actually using a sword has already been related in this work, from a credible source,† it must be held as at least uncertain. Its improbability is very strongly indicated by its not appearing in an extensive and minute catalogue of

* Witty Apophthegms delivered by King James, 12mo, 1671.

† Volume i. p. 202.

the monarch's dislikes, which Ben Jonson has given in his Masque of the Gypsies Metamorphosed, an entertainment produced in the King's own presence at Burley Castle, the seat of the Marquis (afterwards Duke) of Buckingham, in 1621.

As that catalogue is exceedingly curious—a perfect nosology, indeed, of nervous weaknesses—and as it is highly illustrative of James's character, it is here introduced.

CLOD. * Let us bless the sovereign and his senses.
PATRICO. We'll take them in order, as they have being.
And first of Seeing.

From a Gypsy in the morning,
Or a pair of squint eyes turning;
From the goblin, and the spectre;
From a woman true to no man,
Which is ugly besides common;
A smock rampant, and the itches
To be putting on the breeches— †
Wheresoe'er they have their being,
Chorus. Bless the sovereign and his SEEING.

* This Masque was performed at Burley Castle, August 1621, as part of the entertainments given to the King by Buckingham, whose house it was. James was particularly well pleased with his entertainments here, and 'could not forbear expressing his contentment, in certain verses he made to this effect, that "the air and the weather, and every thing else, even the stags and bucks in their fall, seemed to smile; so that there was hopes of a smiling boy within a while;" to which end, he concluded with a wish or *votum* for the felicity and fruitfulness of that blessed couple.'—*Chamberlain's Letters.*

† An allusion to ladies who govern their husbands. James's horror for such persons is often perceptible throughout his life.

PATRICO. From a fool and serious toys,
From a lawyer three parts noise,
From impertinence, like a drum
Beat at dinner in his room,
From a tongue without a file,
Heaps of phrases and no style,
From a fiddle out of tune,
As the cuckoo is in June, *
From the candlesticks of Lothbury, †
And the loud pure wives of Banbury, ‡
Or a long pretended fit
Meant for mirth, but is not it,
Only time and ears out-wearing—
Chorus. Bless the sovereign and his HEARING.
PATRICO. From a strolling tinker's sheet,
Or a pair of carriers' feet,
From the diet and the knowledge
Of the students in Bears'-College, §
From tobacco, with the type
Of the devil's glyster-pipe,
Or a stink, all stinks excelling,

* The dissonant note of the cuckoo in this month is alluded to by Shakspeare:

'So when he had occasion to be seen,
He was but as the *cuckoo is in June*,
Heard, not regarded.'

† Lothbury, a street in London where brass candlesticks were made; the noise of which manufacture was very discordant.

‡ Banbury was a great stronghold of Puritanism. 'Banbury zeal, cheese, and cakes,' is a proverb mentioned by Fuller in his Worthies.

§ A jocular term for the Bear garden. The author has explained his meaning in a passage of another poem.

'The meat-boat of Bear's College, Paris garden,
Stunk not so ill.'

From a fishmonger's stale dwelling—
Chorus. Bless the sovereign and his SMELLING.
PATRICO. From an oyster and fried fish,
A sow's baby in a dish,
From any portion of the swine,
From bad venison and worse wine,
Ling, what cook soe'er it broil,
Though with mustard sauced and oil,
Or what else would keep men fasting—
Chorus. Bless the sovereign and his TASTING.
PATRICO. Both from bird-lime and from pitch,
From a doxey and her itch,
From the bristles of a hog,
Or the ring-worm in a dog,
From the courtship of a briar,
Or St Anthony's old fire,
From a needle, or a thorn
In the bed at e'en or morn,
Or from any gout's least grutching—
Chorus. Bless the sovereign and his TOUCHING.
PATRICO. Bless him too from all offences,
In his sports, as in his senses;
From a boy to cross his way,
From a fall, or a foul day. *
* * * * *

In speech, James was much and justly admired, notwithstanding that his voice was a little thickened by the peculiarity of his organs, and further rendered disagreeable to English ears by its Scotch accent, which, as we are informed by Fuller, he

* A foul day naturally happened frequently; nor did the King, it is recorded, always bear it patiently. A fall from his horse was also by no means an unfrequent occurrence, as already mentioned.—NICHOLS.

rather affected than declined. 'The masculine worth of his set orations,' says this writer, 'commanded reverence, if not admiration, in all judicious hearers.' After one of his speeches in the House of Peers, Bacon, whose duty it partly was, as Lord Keeper, to eke out the King's meaning with something of his own, rose, and could only say, "Ne post divinum et immortale factum, aliquid mortale faceret." It was, however, in what is called table-talk, that James most excelled. 'He was very witty,' says Weldon, 'and had as many ready witty jests as any man living, at which he would not smile himself, but deliver them in a grave and serious manner.' Nor was James's wit, as many suppose, mere punning or quibbling on language. He possessed that property of mind, which constitutes at once poetry and wit—the power of readily discerning the resemblances of remote ideas, and of bringing the one to contrast with and illustrate the other. In graver conversation, he was perhaps even superior to what he was in light talk. He loved speculative discourse upon moral and political subjects; and his talent for conducting such discussions is a frequent theme of admiration, not only among his courtiers, but in the unsuborned writings of the foreigners who visited him.

One unfortunate fault greatly deformed the conversation of King James—his notorious habit of profane swearing. 'Nay, he would not only *swear*,' says a quaint writer of the day, 'but he would *curse*;' and, as we are informed by Weldon, he would even go 'one strain higher, verging on blasphemy.' Of course, it was only when excited by some extraordinary feeling, that he ut-

tered language of this reprehensible nature; and he had himself the grace, in his calmer moments, 'to say, that he hoped God would not impute these expressions to him as sins, seeing they proceeded from passion.' * It was also, in a great measure, a fault common to the age. Yet, after every allowance, we fear he must be held as greatly and unusually tainted by this vice; for it seems to have been sufficiently notorious to be the subject of talk in foreign countries. Lord Herbert of Cherbury informs us, † that the Prince of Condé, in conversation one day, allowed that the King was gifted with much learning, knowledge, and clemency; but he (the Prince) had heard that his Majesty was *much given to cursing*. Herbert's apology was good enough for a joke, but not good enough, we fear, for an excuse. 'I answered, that it was out of his gentleness. The Prince demanding how cursing could be a gentleness, I replied, "Yes; for, though he could punish men himself, yet he leaves them to God to punish;" which defence of the King, my master, was afterwards much celebrated in the French court.' Perhaps something should be allowed to a circumstance mentioned by Fuller: 'In common speaking, as in hunting, he stood not in the clearest but nearest way. He would never go about to make expressions.' ‡

* Weldon.

† Memoirs, *prope finem*.

‡ King James once went out of his way to hear a noted preacher. The clergyman, seeing the King enter, left his text, to declaim against swearing. At the conclusion of the discourse, James thanked him for his sermon, but asked him what connexion swearing had with the text. "Why," answered the divine, "since your Majesty came

Swearing is the vice of a hasty mind. It is also found oftenest in what is called a *hearty* character, and least frequently in men of cold temperament, and artificial manners.

The wit of King James has received nearly the highest commendation from a late writer,* who makes the remark, that, 'in some of his facetious sallies, as when he said to the shabby candidate for knighthood, who knelt down with a too-evident sense of his own unworthiness, "Look up, man! I have more reason to be ashamed than thou," even Charles the Second could not have outdone his grandfather.' As another of the like sort, may be instanced what he said to a fellow-countryman who complained, soon after he came to his southern kingdom, that the English called the Scots by the epithet of beggarly: "Wait a little, man," said the King, "and I will soon make them as beggarly as the Scots!" In general, however, the humour of James's sayings arises rather from the grotesque and fantastic moulds in which he cast his thoughts, than from what is now called pointed wit. It is somewhat surprising to find Bacon, in his Apophthegms, recording that, 'as James was a prince of great judgment, so was he also a prince

out of your way, I thought I could not do less than go out of mine to meet you."—*Bennet's Treasury of Wit*, ii. 163.

In a MS. written by Robert Traill, minister of London, it is stated, in reference to the earlier part of James's life, that he stood much under awe of the celebrated Welch, the preacher; and when he happened to be swearing in a public place, would turn round, and ask if Welch was near. The King might do so, by way of a joke; it is ridiculous to suppose that he did it from fear.

* Quarterly Review, XLI. 74.

of a marvellously pleasant humour,' and then instancing, as proof, that, as the King was going through Lusen, near Greenwich, he asked what town it was, and was answered Lusen; asking, some time after, "What town is this we are now in?" and being told it was still Lusen, he said, "I will be King of Lusen!" Such a saying as this is not wit; it is only an expression which tickles the mind of a hearer, from its being characteristic of a man whose character is amusing; it is wit by association on the part of the hearer. Of the same nature is a jest recorded by Mr Phineas Pett, the King's ship-builder. Pett having been accused, by some malignant persons, of producing insufficient work, his Majesty condescended to preside over an examination of such of the wooden walls of Old England as this person had had any thing to do with. Part of the wood was said to be cross-grained; but, being tried, and found perfectly good, "Why," said the King, "the cross-grain, methinks, is in Pett's accusers, not in his work."

Walton, in his Life of Dr Donne, relates a delightful anecdote of James. Dr Donne was so fond of London, on account of its having been the scene of his birth and education, and from the delight he experienced in the society of an old-established circle of friends, that he refused a number of country benefices that were offered to him. At last, the Deanery of St Paul's falling vacant, James found an opportunity of giving him his heart's content. Having ordered the Doctor to attend at dinner, 'When his Majesty had sat down, before he had eat any meat, he said, *after his pleasant manner:* "Dr Donne, I have invited you to din-

ner, and, though you sit not down with me, yet I will carve to you of a dish that I know you love well; for, knowing you love London, I do therefore make you Dean of St Paul's; and, when I have dined, then do you take your beloved dish home to your study, say grace there to yourself, and much good may it do to you!"

In other of his sayings, if not wit, there is evidence of a mind alive to observation, and capable of using it. Of this sort is the apophthegm which he made use of, in recommending a country life to his gentry, in preference to dwelling at London: "Gentlemen," such is said to have been his address, "at London you are like ships at sea, which show like nothing; but in your country villages, you are like ships in a river, which show like great things." The illustration here is excellent. There was something better still in the saying he uttered, in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford, where, on a visit in 1606, he took his degree as Doctor in all faculties. Remarking the little chains with which all the books were bound to their shelves, he said, "I would wish, if ever it be my lot to be carried captive, to be shut up in this prison, to be bound with these chains, and to spend my life with these fellow-captives which stand here chained!" Here we find the native propensity of the monarch, which was to learning, not to sovereignty, breaking resistlessly through the artificial character he wore, and affording us a delightful peep into the inner recesses of the man. The saying looks like a Pythagorean recollection of a former state; as if he had all at once forgot that he was now a King, and, as the Samian sage remembered having been a soldier in the Trojan war, suddenly

awakened to the idea that he had formerly been a doctor of divinity, accustomed, in dim college libraries, to bend daily over solemn folios, deeply ribbed in the back, and breathing the dust of ages from every moth-worm pore.

In a curious collection of jests, printed in the year 1640, and to which the name of Archy Armstrong * is prefixed as a decoy, there occurs an anecdote which shows that James was not uniformly accessible to the flattery of his courtiers. Two gentlemen, noted for agility, trying to outjump each other in his presence, he said to the individual who jumped farthest, "And is this your best? Why, man, when I was a young man, I would have out-leaped this myself." An old practised courtier, who stood by, thought this a good opportunity of ingratiating himself with his master, and struck in with, "That you would, Sir; I have seen your Majesty leap much further myself." '"O' my soul!" quoth the King, as his usual phrase was, "thou lyest; I *would*, indeed, have leapt much farther, but I never *could* leap so far by two or three feet."'

This anecdote naturally suggests a few remarks upon what was a very disagreeable feature of the age, the custom of plying the King, and indeed all men of station, with gross flattery. Just in pro-

* 'King James, about to knight a Scottish gentleman, asked his name, who made answer, his name was Edward Rudry Hudrinblas Tripplin Hipplas. "How, how?" quoth the King. Replies the gentleman as before, "Edward Rudry Hudrinblas Tripplin Hipplas." The King, not able to retain in memory such a long, and withal so confusedly heaped up name, "Prithee," said he, "rise up, and call thyself, Sir, what thou wilt;" and so dismissed him.'—*Banquet of Jests*, 1640.

portion, it would appear, as there has been a party in England who depreciated and opposed the King, so has there always been one which endeavoured to exalt him by this base expedient. In James's time, when a democratic party was beginning to be formed, there also arose this detestable habit among the courtiers; as if it could have been hoped that humble expressions, used towards the sovereign by his friends, were to infect his enemies with the same reverence for him. When historians sum up James's character, they never allow any thing for the effect which the inordinate flatteries of the people were calculated to have upon the mind of the monarch; nor consider how much of his disposition to arbitrary rule might be owing to their profession of a willingness to be ruled arbitrarily. Yet it is evident that, though he might occasionally resist the impressions thus attempted to be made upon him, he must have been, upon the whole, spoilt not a little by appliances so repeatedly presented, and which appealed so strongly to his self-love. It is unpleasant to observe how much of this mischief is to be charged upon literary men, and especially the poets; whose flatteries, as more public, must of course have been most hurtful. What expression of contempt, for instance, could be appropriate to the epithet bestowed by the Earl of Stirling on the King?—'God of Poets, and king of men!' How mortifying is it to find the pure and classic genius of Jonson bent to the composition of the following 'epigram,' as it is called—

'How, best of Kings, dost thou a sceptre bear!
How, best of poets, dost thou the laurel wear

But two things rare the Fates had in their store,
And gave thee both, to show they had no more.
For such a poet, while thy days were green,
Thou wert, as chief of them are said t' have been.
And such a prince thou art, we daily see,
As chief of those still promise they will be.
Whom should my muse then fly to but the best
Of Kings for grace—of poets, for my text?'

The dependent circumstances of such persons may perhaps be admitted as a slight palliation of their offences; for, at this period, and for a long time after, literary men were *kept* by the magnates of the land, very much upon the same principle as that by which the Irish and Highland chieftains of the same age retained their sennachies. But what palliation shall be presented for the adulation of the court sermons? which generally fulfilled James's idea of his divine right, by actually making him a part of religion, and bestowing upon him a share of that worship which they gave to the Supreme Being.

Something remains to be explained in regard to the religion of King James, which, as already inferred, was that of the Church of England. James was perhaps too much of a theologian to be a devotee. He partook more of Le Sorbonne than of La Trappe. He was deeply read in scripture; could quote its texts with great facility; knew it even with philological exactness; accomplishments which enabled him to be of great service, it is allowed, in superintending the translation which was executed at his command. It cannot be clearly discerned, however, that he was what would now be considered a pious, or even a *serious* man. His

colloquial language, besides its censurable admixture of rude oaths, was essentially tinged with a certain degree of irreverence; and his personal behaviour was of the same cast. In church, for instance, he could never conduct himself decently. During the whole time of the sermon, he was ever and anon directing ordinary discourse to his courtiers; sometimes even laughing outright at their sallies or his own. Wilson tells us that, whenever any preacher of uncommon piety held forth before him, Bishop Neale of Lincoln busied himself, with laudable ingenuity, to divert his attention from the discourse, by telling him '*merrie tales;*' at which the King, says Wilson, 'would laugh, and tell those near him that he could not hear the preacher for the old satyr bishop!' In his secret mind, nevertheless, James perhaps cherished a good deal of pure devotional sentiment. Both at the time when his life was despaired of in 1619, and when upon his real deathbed in 1625, his conduct was every thing that could be expected of a good Christian.

With regard to the forms of religion, James was a zealous advocate of those styled Episcopalian, as well as for that mode of church-government. He detested the Puritans, for their mean bald character, and perpetual nibbling at the established church. The Catholics he regarded with aversion and fear, as the subjects of an alien power, and because they sported a doctrine that heretic princes forfeited their titles. He has himself given an account of his sentiments on all these subjects, in rebutting a charge which Cardinal Bellarmine had brought against him, to the effect that he was an apostate. Some parts of the passage are worth

quoting, for various reasons. 'How can I be an apostate,' says he, 'not onely having ever been brought up in that religion which I presently profess, but even my father and grandfather on that side * professing the same? As for the Queen my mother, of worthy memorie; although she continued in that religion wherein she was nourished, yet was she so far from being superstitious or jesuited therein, that at my baptisme (although I was baptised by a Popish Archbishop) she sent him worde to forbeare to use the spettle in my baptisme; which was obeyed, being indeed a filthy and apish tricke, rather in scorn than imitation of Christ. And her own very words were, "*That she would not have a pockie priest to spit in her child's mouth.*" As also the Font wherein I was christened, was sent from the late Queen here of famous memory, who was my god-mother; and what her religion was, Pius V. was not ignorant. And for further proof, that that renowned Queen my mother was not superstitious; in all her letters, whereof I received many, she never made mention of religion, nor laboured to persuade me in it; so at her last words, she commanded her Master-household, a Scottish gentleman, my servant, and yet alive, to tell me, "That, although she was of another religion than that wherein I was brought up, yet she would not press me to change, except my own conscience forced me to it; for so that I led a good life, and were careful to do justice and govern well, she doubted not but I would be in a good case with the profession of my own religion." † . . . . I believe in

* Lord Darnley, and his father Matthew Earl of Lennox.

† Works, p. 301.—These anecdotes of Queen Mary are

the three creeds; that of the Apostles, that of the Council of Nice, and that of Athanasius. . . . . I reverence and admit the four first general councils as Catholique and orthodoxe. . . . . As for the blessed Virgin Mary, I yield her that which the angel Gabriel pronounced of her, and which, in her canticle, she prophesied of herself—that she is blessed amongst women, and that all generations shall call her blessed. I reverence her as the mother of Christ; but I dare not mock her, and blaspheme against God, by praying her to command and controule her sonne, who is her God and her Saviour. Nor yet do I think that she hath no other thing to doe in heaven, than to hear every idle man's suite, and busy herself in their errands; whiles requesting, whiles commanding her sonne; whiles coming down to kisse and love with priests, and whiles brawling and disputing with devils.' But perhaps enough has been said, to show the faith and practice of the royal theologue.

James's character is described in lively, and, upon the whole, correct colours, in the same masque of Ben Jonson which has been already quoted for his antipathies. A captain of gypsies comes forward, pitches upon his Majesty in the crowd of spectators, and, inspecting his hand, thus addresses him:—

'Bless my masters, the old and the young,
From the gall of the heart and the stroke of the tongue!
With you, lucky bird, I begin, let me see;
I aim at the best, and I trow you are he.
There's some luck already, if I understand
The grounds of mine art; here's a gentleman's hand:

very *recherché*, and say a great deal for her liberal and amiable disposition.

I'll kiss it for luck-sake: you shall, by this line,
Love a horse and a hound, but no part of a swine.
To hunt the brave stag, not so much for your food,
As the weal of your body, and the health o' your blood.
You're a man of good means, and have territories store
Both by sea and land; and were born, Sir, to more,
Which you, like a lord, and the prince of your peace,
Content with your havings, despise to increase.
You live chaste and single, and have buried your wife, ‡
And mean not to marry, by the line of your life.
Whence he that conjectures your quality, learns,
You're an honest good man, and take care of your bairns.
Your Mercurie's hill, too, a wit doth betoken,
Some book-craft you have, and are pretty well spoken.
But, stay, in your Jupiter's mount, what's here?
A king, a monarch! what wonders appear!
High, bountiful, just; a Jove for your parts,
A master of men, and that reign in their hearts.'

One passage in this address deserves to be commented on;

'You are an honest good man, and take care of your bairns;'

which, as it does not yield the praise that is apt to enter into a set panegyric, but seems to be a plain unvarnished account of what James really was, must be held as saying a great deal in favour of the homely worth, and good domestic character, of the King. James has often been stigmatised as a bad husband and father. It has even been insinuated against him, that he was instrumental in the death of his eldest son, from jealousy of his rising popularity. We learn, on the contrary, from Sir Theodore Mayerne, his physician, that

‡ This was written two years after Queen Anne's death.

his health was considerably affected by grief for the deaths of Prince Henry and Queen Anne. That he was sincerely attached to his consort, and regarded her womanly foibles with that gentleness of construction which marks the truly good husband, is, we think, pretty well evidenced by the letter which he wrote to her in consequence of the fracas about Prince Henry before she left Scotland. It is further proved by a delightful anecdote, which is thus recorded in a private letter, of date July 1613:—'At their last being at Theobald's, the Queen, shooting a deer, mistook her mark, and killed Jewel, the King's most special and favourite hound, at which he stormed exceedingly a while; but, after he knew who did it, he was soon pacified, and, with much kindness, wished her not to be troubled with it, for he should love her never the worse; and the next day sent her a diamond worth two thousand pounds, as a legacy from his dead dog.* Love and kindness increase daily between them; and it is thought they were never on better terms.' †

* However good-naturedly the King forgave this accident, he appears to have long remembered it. In 1621, when Archbishop Abbot, by an unfortunate accident, killed the keeper of a park in hunting, and sent to inform the King, his Majesty returned this gracious answer:—'That such an accident might befall any man; himself had once the ill-luck to kill the keeper's horse under him; his Queen in like sort killed him the best broche he ever had; he therefore willed the Archbishop not to discomfort himself.' Perhaps no man but James would have attempted to comfort a man for killing a fellow-creature, by bringing up similar instances of horse and dog-slaughter.

† Letter from Mr Chamberlain—Winwood's Memorials. —'Queen Anne,' says the writer in the Quarterly Review just quoted, 'though by no means faultless in tem-

Perhaps, after the exertions lately made by a distinguished literary antiquary, ‡ to prove the happiness of James's domestic relations, it is almost superfluous to bring forward further evidence. Yet I cannot help quoting two letters from the Queen to the King, written in a style of easy familiar humour, and which bear strongly upon the fact. The originals are in the Advocates' Library.

'SIR—Your letter was welcome to me. I have bin as glad of the faire weather as yourself. The last parte of your letter—yow have guessed right that I wold laugh. Who wold not laugh, both at the persons and the subject, but more so at so well a chosen Mercurie betweane Mars and Venus? Yow knowe that women can hardly keepe counsell. I humbly desire your M. to tell me how it is possible that I should keepe this secret that have alreadie tolde it, and shall tell it to as manie

per, or eminent in understanding, appears to have had qualities which attracted general regard; and the people watched her last illness with an affectionate concern. In the early part of the reign, her supposed disposition to interfere in politics excited a jealousy far greater, apparently, than circumstances really warranted. In the secret correspondence maintained by Cecil with James before the death of Elizabeth, Anne is mentioned with anxiety, as liable, from facility of disposition, to be acted upon by sinister influences. But the evil never became very formidable. Her manners were extremely popular. Coke, in his Detection, boldly panegyrises her piety, prudence, temperance, and chastity. Even Weldon confesses that she was a very brave Queen; and Osborne, while he censures her uncovered shoulders, yet condescends to observe, that her skin was "amiable," and her disposition "*debonnair.*"'—*Quarterly Review*, xli. 77.

‡ Mr D'Israeli.

as I speake with. If I were a poete, I wold make a song of it, and sing it to the tune of "Three fooles well mett." So kissing your hands, I rest, yours, 'ANNA, R.'

'My Heart—I desyre your Majestie to pardon that I have not answered your Majestie sooner upon your letters, because I would know the truth of the park of Oatlands, as I understand there is neere forty grossi beastiani of divirs kindes, that devours my deere, as I will tell your Majestie at meeting. Whereas your Majestie wolde have me to meete you at Withall, I am content, but I fear some inconveniens in my leggs, which I have not felt hier. So kissin your Majestie's hands, I rest, yours, 'ANNA, R.'

With regard to James's character as a father, it seems, so far as he was permitted by his duties to indulge in intercourse with his children, to have been equally good. His eldest son Henry, from an early period, lived in a house of his own, and followed pursuits different from those in which the King was engaged; the younger children were placed out at board in the houses of different persons. He therefore saw little of them. Every now and then, however, he seems to have sent them letters and presents, to testify his affection towards them; to which they were as constantly returning him answers, couched in the same endearing terms. A great number of the letters of these interesting children are preserved, and, when read in proper chronological series, serve to show the progress of their minds from the merest infancy, when they began their correspondence, up to the

years of early manhood. Some are written in Latin, some in French, and some in English; for in all those languages were both Henry and Charles accomplished at a wonderfully early age. To assure us against the suspicion of their receiving assistance from their preceptors, we find James earnestly commanding them to write from their own minds. *

The Latin letters are always addressed 'Amantissime pater,' and the whole correspondence affords the strongest evidence both of the fatherly care and the fatherly affection of James towards his offspring. It is at the same time, as Mr D'Israeli remarks, a strong presumption in favour of the worth and intellect of the King, that his children were all so well educated, and turned out so much superior to the generality of young men; for, whatever Henry might have been, and whatever Charles turned out to be, in other respects, both of them were by no means ordinary in native or acquired power of mind.

But, indeed, James seems to have been a kind of enthusiast about domestic happiness, and the concord of families, in general; and it was, perhaps, just in these familiar matters that his character was most unexceptionably amiable. The great delight which he took in match-making, his

* The following is one of the earliest letters of the boy, afterwards Charles I.

'Sweete, sweete father; I learn to decline substantives and adjectives. Give me your blessing. I thank you for my best man. Your loving son, YORK.

Superscribed, 'To my father, the King.' *

* From the original in the Balfour Collections, Advocates' Library.

frequent presiding over weddings and christenings,* and even his political fancy of being a kind of general father to his whole people, are all traits of a spirit alive to the relations of domestic life. Startling as the assertion may appear, we are also convinced, that his fondness for the society of young men, which displayed itself so violently in his successive attachments to Car and Villiers, and which has never been rationally explained any other way, was owing in a great measure to this peculiarity of his mind; though perhaps, in an inferior degree, to the repose which their puerile conversation af-

* On the 25th of June 1618, the King visited Halsted in Kent, where a little child of the name of Pope, granddaughter of his host, was presented to him, holding in her hand the following paper of verses:

'Sir, this my little mistris here,
Did neere ascend to Peter's chaire
Nor anye triple crown did weare,
And yet she is a Pope.

Noe benefice she ever solde,
Nor pardon e'er dispenst for gold;
She scarcely is a quarter olde,
And yet she is a Pope.

Noe king her feete did ever kiss,
Nor had worse look from her than this;
Nor doth she hope,
To saint men with a rope,
And yet she is a Pope.

A female Pope you'll say, a second Joane,
But sure this is Pope Innocent, or none!'

When we find the king engaged in little amiable frolics of this kind, we are apt to question that his character was obscured by any shade of cruelty or churlishness, such as is sometimes ascribed to it.

forded to his thoughts after study, or 'to a certain spark of boyish wildness, which hung about him to the end of his life, and often broke forth strangely from amidst his graver qualities.' * That he really did possess a heart capable of paternal feeling in this extreme degree, is amply proved by his interference in a very extraordinary case, which occurred in 1607; where the Earl of Lincoln pretended to take offence at his son's marriage, and cast him off, for the mean purpose of sparing his maintenance. The son being in the King's service, we find his Majesty writing the following letter to the father.

'James Rex: Right trusty and well-beloved cosen, it seems strang to us to be forced to write to a father for a sonne: but when parents will breake thos bondes of nature, and leave that care of thars that they ought to have, we that are common parents to all must putt those affections upon us; which shall serve to discharge us in our places, and teach them the duty of thayrs. Your sonne and my servant, Sir Henry Fynes, as I am given credibly to understand, reseaves dayle hard measure from you, both in that you keep from him a great part of his present mantenance; and also make spoyle of such wods as he, with his own mony, hath purchased from others; and detain such evidences from him of land given to his mother for a joyntar, and after to himself in reversion; and, as if all this was not enofe, you wage lawe with him, as if he were not your sonne, but some adversary to be utterly undon by you. We ar so sensible of the duty of a child to a father, as we would not give any respecte to

* Quarterly Review, xli. 74.

an undutifull child against his natural father; but since your sonne hath given you no juste cause of offence, lett me tell you, if you will forgett you are his father, I will remember that I am his master, and will neither see nor suffer you unjustly to oppress him; and doe therefore charge you, either to show me just cause why you thus deale with him, or else command you to right him in these and such like wrongs as ar made knowen to us; whisch if you shall not doe, we will take that corce that in our regall justis we thinke fitt. And so we commit you to God.' * It is delightful to find power exerted, even in this arbitrary manner, in favour of the oppressed.

Perhaps it should be adduced, as another proof of James's disposition to venerate the decencies of private life, that he discountenanced every attempt at libertinism, both in his court and in literature, constantly studying, by the blameless purity of his own life, to exemplify to his subjects the conduct which he wished them to follow.

After so much has been said to vindicate James from the contempt in which his character has been held, it may naturally be asked, how a man of so much ability and worth has come to be so much depreciated. The answer is a very simple one: James's intellect, though originally of the best order, was imperfectly organized. He did not possess a mind of a certain degree of power, and good of its degree. It was a very great mind, partially crazed and enfeebled—a giant, as it were, born in the seventh month. Of his character, or physical constitution, nearly the same thing may be said.

* From Fynes' own Memoirs, *apud* Brydges' Peerage.

It was a character suited to the lofty proportions of the mind accompanying it, but, in the same degree, imperfectly organized. It was a character 'not uncomely,' but with knock-knees. Thus, the best efforts of his mind, whether in his character of king, or author, had ever a taint of puerility, which caused the admiration of the public to be lost in laughter or contempt. Thus, also, almost every minor action of life, however meritorious, was rendered, to a certain extent, unworthy or foolish, by the meanness of style in which he executed it. The writers of his own day tell us, in their quaint way, that his reason would have been of a high-towering and masterful sort, but for the choler and fear which alloyed it; * for he was controlled in the most extensive political schemes by the terror of assassination, and never permitted his regal duty to stand in the way of his humour. This is the same idea in other words. Hence arise the charges brought against him, that he was a pedant in literature, and a dissembler in kingship. He was a cunning, because a timid man, † and pedantic, because his mind, with all its good

* It is amusing to observe his own unconciousness of this part of his character. He tells us in one of his works, that his *dicton* or allegorical epithet, when in Scotland, was '*the Lyon*, as expressing *fortitude!*' I have shown some reasons, however, for doubting the popular theory of his antipathy to the sight of cold iron. And it is certain that, at various periods of his life, he displayed considerable nerve in facing danger. His leading armies against Bothwell and the Catholic Lords; his conduct when the former traitor met him in his closet; his presence of mind under the dagger of Alexander Ruthven; are all good instances.

† See Wilson's in particular, 289.

qualities, could not resist the occasional intrusion of grotesque ideas. To these causes, also, we may trace his high theoretical notion of his own dignity and prerogative, and the humble line of action upon which he was always, at the same time, proceeding—his assurance that he was a kind of inferior deity, and his inability all the while to act the part of an ordinary man. And thus was he, altogether, a bundle of contradictions and paradoxes; the most extraordinary specimen of human nature, perhaps, presented in his time. It really was not without some reason that Sully termed him 'the wisest fool in Christendom.'

But perhaps the best solution, after all, of the puzzle in James's reputation, is, that his merits are of a kind which do not make great impression upon mankind; while his faults, though in reality trivial, are those which men least easily pardon. We are but too apt, in the perversity of our nature, to excuse the faults of men as weaknesses, and to condemn their weaknesses as faults.

CHAPTER VI.

RISE OF CAR, THE FAVOURITE.—QUARRELS OF THE ENGLISH AND SCOTCH.—DEATH OF PRINCE HENRY.—MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.—MURDER OF SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

1610—1613.

It is supposed to have been during the year 1608, that James first adopted into his favour Robert Car, afterwards Earl of Somerset. Car was the third son of Sir Thomas Ker of Ferniehirst, chieftain of a sept of one of the best families on the Scottish Border, and who had been a faithful friend to the King when in Scotland. He was thus, whatever the English pamphleteers have said of him, a youth of good birth. When a boy, he became one of twelve pages who waited upon the King towards the close of his Scottish reign; a situation then, and for many years after, deemed, even where a peer was to be served instead of a king, advantageous for the education and fortune of a gentleman. When James removed to England, he changed his pages for footmen, that he might make his personal attendance resemble that of Elizabeth; and Car went to France in quest of other employment. Returning afterwards, when grown to manhood, he condescended to appear as

squire to a Scottish nobleman, at a court tilting-match; when, being employed to present his principal's ensign to the King, his horse happened to rear, and threw him, with a broken leg, at James's feet. The good-natured King, interested in the misfortune, and also in the good looks of the squire, thought proper to get him deposited in the palace, and afterwards visited him in his confinement. This gave him an opportunity of ascertaining that Car had formerly been in his own service, and also to observe the handsome features and gentle innocent demeanour of the youth; all which causes combined, caused him to conceive a fondness for him, of that anomalous kind which has already been alluded to. During the progress of Car's convalescence, James applied himself to the task of cultivating his mind; acting personally, it would appear, as his instructor in the Latin tongue! When once fully ingratiated with the King, it required only a moderate share of tact to preserve his favour. Car, though possessed of nothing like talent, had at least enough of penetration to observe the King's foibles; having also enough of servility to accommodate himself to them, he might be considered as fully accomplished for his situation. Knowing that James liked to see men well dressed, and in new fashions, he took care to appear every day in attire at once novel and beautiful. In every particular as to person, he studied the royal taste. Above all things, he took care never to appear disgusted by the unseemly fondling which James was in the habit of bestowing upon all whom he loved. But the royal foibles through which this favourite rose, and other peculiarities of the King's character, are so spiritedly

and amusingly delineated in a private letter of the time, that we cannot resist the temptation of presenting it to the reader, instead of any further observations of our own. It is addressed to Sir John Harrington of Kelston, the witty gentleman whose observations have been already so often quoted in this work, and who, some years before, had had an interview with James, the circumstances of which are noted below. *

* 'It behoveth me now to recite my journal, respecting my gracious command of my sovereign to come to his closet. When I came to the presence chamber, and had gotten good place to see the lordly attendants, and bowed my knee to the prince, I was ordered by a special messenger—that is, an secret sort—to wait a while in an outward chamber, whence, in near an hour waiting, the same knave led me up a passage, and so to a small room, where was good order of paper, ink, and pens, put on a board for the prince's use. Soon upon this, the prince his highness did enter, and in much good humour asked, If I was cousin to Lord Harrington of Exton? I humbly replied, His Majesty did me some honour in inquiring my kin to one whom he had so late honoured and made a baron; and, moreover, did add, We were both branches of the same tree. Then he inquired much of learning, and showed me his own in such sort as made me remember my examiner at Cambridge aforetime. He sought much to know my advances in philosophy, and uttered profound sentences of Aristotle, and such like writers, which I had never read, and which some are bold enough to say, others do not understand; but this I must pass by. The prince did now press my reading to him a canto in Ariosto; praised my utterance, and said he had been of many as to my learning, in the time of the queen. He asked me what I thought pure wit was made of; and whom it did best become? Whether the king should not be the best clerk in his own country; and if this land did not entertain good opinion of his learning and good wisdom? His majesty did much press for my opinion touching the power of Satan in matter of witchcraft; and ask

'My good and trusty knight; If you have good will and good health to perform what I shall commend, you may set forward for court, whenever it suiteth your own conveniency. The King hath often enquired after you, and would readily see and converse with the "merry blade," as he hath oft called you since you was here. I will now premise certain things to be observed by you to-

ed me, with much gravity, why the devil did work more with ancient women than with others? * * His Majesty, moreover, was pleased to say much, and favouredly, of my good report for mirth and good conceit; to which I did courtly answer, as not willing a subject should be wiser than his prince, nor even appear so.

'More serious discourse did ensue, wherein I wanted room to continue, and sometimes room to escape; for the queen his mother was not forgotten, nor Davison neither. His highness told me, her death was visible in Scotland before it did really happen, being, he said, spoken of in secret, by those whose power of sight [*second sight*] presented to them a bloody head dancing in the air. He then did remark much on this gift, and said he had sought out of certain books a sure way to attain knowledge of future chances. Hereat he named many books, which I did not know, nor by whom written; but advised me not to consult some authors, which would lead me to evil consultations. I told his Majesty the fear of Satan, I much feared, damaged my bodily frame; but I had not further will to court his friendship for my soul's hurt. We next discoursed somewhat on religion, when at length he said, "Now, Sir, you have seen my wisdom in some sort, and I have pried into yours. I pray you, do me justice in your report, and, in good season, I will not fail to add to your understanding in such points as I may find you lack amendment." I made curtsey hereat, and withdrew down the passage, and out at the gate, amidst the many varlets and lordly servants who stood around. I did not forget to tell that his majesty asked much my opinion of the new weed tobacco, and said it would, by its use, infuse ill qualities on the brain, and that no learned man ought to taste it, and wished it forbidden.'—*Park's Nugæ Antiquæ.*

wards well gaining our prince's good affection: he doth wondrously covet learned discourse, of which he can furnish you out ample means; he doth admire good fashion in clothes—I pray you give heed hereunto. Strange devices oft come into man's conceit; some regardeth the endowments of the inward sort, wit, valour, or virtue; another hath, perchance, special affection towards outward things, clothes, deportment, and good countenance. I would wish you to be well trimmed; get a new jerkin well bordered, and not too short; the King saith he liketh a flowing garment; be sure it be not all of one sort, but diversely coloured, the collar falling somewhat down, and your ruff well stiffened and bushy. We have lately had many gallants who failed in their suits for want of the observance of these matters. The King is nicely heedful of such points, and dwelleth on good looks and handsome accoutrements. Eighteen servants were lately discharged, and many more will be discarded, who are not to his liking in these matters. I wish you to follow my directions, as I wish you to gain all you desire. Robert Car is now most likely to win the prince's affection, and doth it wondrously in a little time. The prince leaneth on his arm, pinches his cheek, and, while he looketh at Car, directeth his speech to divers others. This young man doth much study all art and device; he hath changed his tailors and tiremen many times, and all to please the prince, who laugheth at the long grown fashion of our young courtiers, and wisheth for change every day. You must see Car before you go to the King, as he was with him when a boy in Scotland, and knoweth his taste and what pleaseth. In your discourse

you must not dwell too long on any one subject, and touch but lightly on religion. Do not, of yourself, say, "This is good or bad;" but, "If it were your Majesty's good opinion, I myself should think so and so." Ask no more questions than what may serve to know the prince's thought. In private discourse, the King seldom speaketh of any man's temper, discretion, or good virtues; so meddle not at all, but find out a clue to guide you to the heart and most delightful subject of his mind. I advise one thing—the roan jennet, whereon the King rideth every day, must not be forgotten to be praised; and the good furniture above all, which lost a great man much notice the other day. A noble did come in suit of a place, and saw the King mounting the roan; delivered his petition, which was heeded and read, but no answer was given. The noble departed, and came to court the next day, and got no answer again. The Lord Treasurer was then pressed to move the King's pleasure touching the petition. When the King was asked for answer thereto, he said, in some wrath, "Shall a King give heed to a dirty paper, when a beggar noteth not his gilt stirrups?" Now it fell out, that the King had new furniture when the noble saw him in the court-yard; but he was overcharged with confusion, and passed by admiring the dressing of the horse. Thus, good knight, our noble failed in his suit. I could relate and offer some other remarks on these matters, but Silence and Discretion should be linked together, like dog and bitch, for of them is gendered Security—I am certain it proveth so at this place. You have lived to see the trim of old times, and what passed in the Queen's days. These things

are no more the same. Your Queen did talk of her subjects' love and good affections, and in good truth she aimed well; our King talketh of his subjects' fear and subjection, and herein I think he doth well too, as long as it holds good. Car hath all favours, as I told you before; the King teacheth him Latin every morning, and I think some one should teach him English too; for, as he is a Scottish lad, he hath much need of better language. The King doth court much his presence; the ladies are not behind hand in their admiration; for I tell you, good knight, this fellow is straight-limbed, strong-shouldered, and smooth-faced, with some sort of cunning and show of modesty; tho', God wot, he well knoweth when to show his impudence. You are not young, you are not handsome, you are not finely; and yet will you come to court, and think to be well-favoured! Why, I say again, good knight, that your learning may somewhat prove worthy hereunto; your Latin and your Greek, your Italian, your Spanish tongues, your wit and discretion may be well looked unto for a while, as strangers at such a place; but these are not the things men live by now-a-days. Will you say the moon shineth all this summer? That the stars are bright jewels fit for Car's ears? That the roan jennet surpasseth Bucephalus, and is worthy to be ridden by Alexander? That his eyes are fire, his tail is Berenice's locks, and a few more such fancies worthy your noticing? If any mischance be to be wished, 'tis breaking a leg in the King's presence, for this fellow owes all his favour to that bout; I think he hath better reason to speak well of his own horse, than of the King's roan jennet. We are almost worn out in

our endeavours to keep pace with this fellow in his duty, and labour to gain favour, but all in vain. Where it endeth I cannot guess; but honours are talked of speedily for him. I trust this by my own son, that no danger may happen from our freedoms. If you come here, God speed your ploughing at the Court: I know you do it rarely at home. So adieu, my good Knight, and I will always write me your truly loving old friend,

'T. HOWARD.'

It is no more than justice to James, to remind the reader, that this letter gives a burlesque, and therefore a somewhat untrue, account of the rise of Car. Some of the circumstances which appear most ridiculous, can, to a certain extent, be explained away. For instance, the fact of James condescending to become the tutor of his favourite, though apparently indicating only the meanness of his taste, proceeded, in reality, from a wish which he entertained to fashion and inform a good mind, hitherto uncultivated, to his own pleasure, that it might serve afterwards, both for agreeable companionship, and for a medium between him and his people; for James was one of those sovereigns who think it necessary to retain a person near them, to bring them all the gossip of the day, learn for them among the people the general feeling in regard to the course of government, and procure them information about the capabilities of men suing for places about the court. In this point of view, James, by patronising Car, only did, in his own eccentric way, what the most of kings have done; and the only fault he can be

charged with is, his having given the minion a place beside his throne, instead of keeping him behind a curtain. He had also this respectable, and, it may be, valid, reason for preferring a man such as Car, without great connections, to any scion of the nobility, that, in case of the necessity of dismissing him, his fall could not excite the resentment of a party.

The rise of the favourite was not so rapid as is generally represented. He was fully in possession of the King's favour in February 1609; during which year James gave him a grant of the forfeited estate of Sir Walter Raleigh, replying to all the remonstrances of that person's friends, 'I maun hae the land—I maun hae't for Car.' But it was not till upwards of two years after, namely, in March 1611, that he conferred upon his favourite the title of Viscount Rochester. Neither can the King be said to have bestowed money upon him with needless or extraordinary profusion. The first *free gift* we find to have been given to him, was one of 500*l.*, in the early part of the year 1611; the second, one of 5000*l.*, towards the end of the same year; and a third of 15,000*l.* appears in the roll for 1612; but after that there is no other. Car's chief emoluments arose from sums which were given to him by applicants for the royal favour; and by that oblique method, he is said to have raised a great deal of money. It should be told, however, in his favour, that, on a particular occasion, when the managers of the royal Exchequer were driven almost to desperation for want of supplies, Car gave them the key of his strong box, and told them to take from it what

they pleased. It was found to contain twenty-five thousand pounds, all of which they took.

An amusing anecdote is related by those writers who represent the King as having been too beneficent to his favourite. He had once, according to those authorities, given Car a precept upon the Treasury for the round sum of twenty thousand pounds; which the bearer, of course, lost no time in presenting to the Earl of Salisbury. Cecil, who always suspected, it is said, that the King still calculated sums according to the Scottish, and not the Sterling mode, paused before executing an order which, at that crisis, was almost sufficient to beggar the Exchequer. For the purpose of making his master aware of the *real* amount of the sum he had accorded to the favourite, he invited his Majesty to dine at his house, and took care to lay down, in a gallery through which the King had to pass, a glittering heap of gold, containing only a fractional part of the amount. James stood in amazement at the sight; for the truth is, he was comparatively unacquainted with money in its tangible shape; and he hastily inquired of the Treasurer to whom it belonged. 'Please your Majesty,' said Cecil, 'it was yours this morning before you gave it away.' The King then 'fell into a passion, protesting he was abused, never intending any such gift; and, casting himself upon the heap, scrabbled out the quantity of two or three hundred pounds, and swore he should have no more.'* But the minister, continues the same authority, was too much afraid of the growing power of the favourite, to diminish the sum more than one half.

* Osborne.

One of James's besetting sins, was a want of firmness in condemning great criminals. But, in 1612, he performed an act of justice, which Bacon, in consideration of the title of the culprit, did not scruple to praise as one of the most remarkable in the history of any age or country. A young Scotch nobleman, Lord Crichton of Sanquhar, had the misfortune, some years before, to lose an eye, in a trial of skill, with one Turner, a fencing-master. It is said, that he had no thought of revenging what was a mere accident on the part of Turner, until, at Paris, Henry IV., understanding he had lost his eye in a rencontre, asked him emphatically, 'If the man yet lived who had done him such an injury?' This question Lord Sanquhar unfortunately understood as a hint that his honour could not subsist with the life of Turner; and accordingly, he had the poor man shot in his own school, seven years after the offence for which he took so bloody a revenge. James caused him, as well as the servants who had done the deed, to be apprehended; and as, in addition to all abstract ideas of justice, the English were at that time inflamed to a great degree against the Scotch, for various instances of unruly behaviour, he ordered the whole, on sentence being pronounced against them, to be executed. It was a circumstance worth relating, that, though Lord Sanquhar had been divorced from his wife only three or four days before his apprehension, she no sooner learned his unfortunate circumstances, and understood that he wished to see her, than, with that love which scarcely any thing can destroy in woman's breast after it has been once implanted, she came

to offer him her consolations in his prison. * At his execution, his firm, yet composed demeanour, with the high character he had enjoyed for courage, talents, and accomplishments, greatly moved the compassion of the spectators; which, however, abated, when they saw that he died a Roman Catholic.

The collisions of the Scotch and English alluded to, and to which this nobleman in part fell a sacrifice, occasioned at this time no small sensation; more especially as they all happened within a short space of time. A Scot of the name of Murray, with the assistance of his men, killed a sergeant who arrested him at Ludgate for a debt; for which, 'more to satisfy the sheriffs of London than justice,' (if we are to believe the satirist Osborne,) the servants were hanged. What proved a more inflammatory instance—Maxwell, the King's confidential servant, thought proper, one court day, to lead Mr Hawley, a member of Gray's Inn, out of the presence-chamber, by a black ribbon, which, according to the fashion then prevalent, the lawyer wore at his ear. For this insult, which the whole of the benchers in London took to themselves, Hawley was urged to demand satisfaction; and Maxwell was informed, that, if he refused to fight, the man he had injured would kill him, whenever he met with an opportunity. It cost the pacific King, and also Lord Bacon, no small pains to get this matter accommodated, by a proper apology on the part of Maxwell. While the public mind was in full excitation from these circumstances, a Scottish gentleman of the name of Ramsay re-

* See Nichols.

sented some insult which he conceived the Earl of Montgomery had offered to him, by smiting that nobleman across the face with his switch. This occurred on the race-ground of Croydon-field, where great numbers of both countries were present; and the English immediately rose in a tumultuous fashion, threatening to make general cause with their countryman against the Scotch. The picturesque feature of the scene which ensued, was, according to Osborne, Mr 'John Pinchback, though a maimed man, having but the perfect use of two of his fingers, riding about with his dagger in his hand, crying, "Let us break our fast with them here, and dine with the rest at London!"' Montgomery, however, tamely submitted to the affront; and the English became quiet, without shedding any blood. Yet such was the alarm which this riot communicated to the Scotch at London, that it is said three hundred were counted, in one day, going through Ware, on the road to their native country. Perhaps the King's predilection for Car, a native of Scotland, tended to aggravate this bitter feeling, on the part of the English, towards the adventurers of that nation; and it is not impossible that his Majesty might be the more willing to sacrifice Sanquhar, to whom he is suspected of having borne personal antipathy, that his death tended to soften the rancour with which his favourite was regarded.

The close of the year 1612 was distinguished by an event, which added to the natural gloom of November all the sadness which can darken the public mind under the infliction of a great national calamity. On the 6th of this month, Prince Henry died of a popular sickness or fever, when he had

nearly completed his nineteenth year, and procured the reputation of possessing almost every manly virtue. Talent, accomplishment in learning and in bodily exercises, vigorous character, public spirit, purity of life and conversation, are among the qualities ascribed to this distinguished prince, whose short life has proved sufficient to supply materials for one of the most pleasing volumes, of an antiquarian character, in the language.* The King was so poignantly afflicted by the death of his son, that he adopted the affecting, though characteristically eccentric resolution, of neither wearing mourning himself, nor permitting any one to approach him in sable attire, in order to spare himself the pain of having the idea of his son's loss repeatedly awakened in his mind.† The people at large mourned the loss of so promising a prince, with the deepest feelings of regret; and it is said to have been long after customary, to console those who lost the eldest hopes of their families, by reminding them that even the good Prince Henry had died, when equally endeared to his parents and the nation.

For some years before the Prince's death, James, naturally anxious about the marriage of his chil-

* Dr Birch's *Life of Prince Henry.*

† It has been already mentioned, that the King had an illness, from grief, in consequence of the death of Prince Henry. That the Queen was equally afflicted by this family calamity, is proved by a touching circumstance—that she could not present herself at the creation of her second son Charles as Prince of Wales, in 1616, lest the sight should renew her grief for the death of her first son, who had undergone the same ceremony, in the same splendid style, only a short time before his death.—*Chamberlain's Letters, Winwood's Memorials.*

dren, had entertained treaties with Spain and France, for young princesses of those courts to be united to his sons; and an arrangement had been completed for the union of the Princess Elizabeth and Frederick, Count Palatine of the Rhine. Frederick was in England at the time of the Prince's demise; and it was found necessary, in order to permit his return to his dominions, and to save expense, to have his nuptials performed little more than three months after that melancholy event. The marriage took place on the 13th of February; and the youthful couple soon after left England. This marriage was most unfortunate, so far as the parties themselves were concerned; for Frederick, by imprudently accepting the kingdom of Bohemia, to which he was called by a body of insurgents in that country, became involved in an unequal war with his superior the Emperor of Germany, and lost not only the sovereignty, to which he had no title, but also his paternal dominions. James has been greatly blamed for not interfering with an active force to protect his son-in-law, whose cause was endeared to all the Protestant part of Christendom; but it is difficult, in candour, to see the propriety of his involving his dominions in war, to prevent the proper effects of a piece of imprudence on the part of a mere relation of his own. It is time that the merits of historical personages should be estimated without a regard to the form of faith in behalf of which they acted. This union, however, has been esteemed fortunate for the country of the Princess; since it was through her daughter, Sophia, that Britain derived the line of sovereigns, who, for a century past, have filled the throne.

The British annals are stained, at this period, with the infamous story of the favourite Rochester and the Countess of Essex. The former person, who, up to this period, had steadily advanced in the favour of his master, now received great promotion from the death of the Earl of Salisbury, whom he was appointed to succeed as Secretary of State. He was also by no means unbeloved by the people; for his manners were hitherto of a winning and gentle description, and he was as yet unpolluted by any great vices. Criminal love, to which the best natures are sometimes found equally subject with the worst, was destined to be the ruin of Rochester.

One of the principal figurantes in the court of Queen Anne, was Frances, Countess of Essex, a young noblewoman of the most exquisite beauty, but, as it afterwards appeared, the nearest thing possible to what is called a fiend in human shape. She was daughter to the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain, and grand-daughter to the unfortunate Duke of Norfolk, whose connexion with the history of Mary has given so tender an interest to all of his name. When only thirteen years of age —too young to consider, as a historian of the day expresses it, but old enough to consent—she had been married, for reasons of mere policy, to Robert, second Earl of Essex, a nobleman but one year older than herself, the son and heir of the celebrated favourite of Elizabeth. Ben Jonson exerted his matchless genius to grace this union with a masque; and, at the time it took place, no prospect could appear fairer than that which extended over the future life of this interesting young pair. What fair scene, however, may not be

blighted by vice, or even by indiscretion? As it was thought proper that the Earl and Countess should not live together till a certain age, the former went abroad to complete his education, and the lady remained at home to grace the court of the Queen. Before the Earl's return, she conceived at once a passion for the person of the Viscount Rochester, and an ambitious wish to become connected with his rising fortunes. Inspired by both feelings, but chiefly by the latter—for she naturally loved to shine high in a court *—she determined, by whatever means, to shake herself free of a husband who proposed to bury her in the country, and marry the man who could secure to her the most glittering place in the court. The force of this passion will be better understood, when the reader is reminded of the efforts made by James to cause noblemen, not connected essentially with the court, to live at their country seats; a fashion which, as may be easily supposed, bore peculiarly hard upon the female part of the peerage. On the return of Essex, therefore, she began a series of machinations of the most atrocious description, with conjurors and other nefarious persons; by which she hoped to establish a cause of divorce from the Earl.

Almost from the beginning of his career as a favourite, Rochester had retained about his person, a gentleman of the name of Overbury, who, being accomplished and ambitious, but destitute of patronage, was glad to serve in the capacity of adviser and secretary to the minion, and supply him,

* We have become convinced, from a careful perusal of a number of documents, that this, and not mere love, was the ruling passion of the Countess.

as it were, at second-hand, with the talent he wanted, for the sake of acquiring a footing at court. This person, concerned for his own interest, which depended upon that of Rochester, was shocked to observe the unlawful passion with which Lady Essex soon succeeded in inspiring his patron; and he made every effort in his power to rescue him from her blandishments, and convince him of the fatal effect they were calculated to have upon his fortunes. But Rochester was too deeply involved in the meshes which the Countess had spread for him, to be accessible to this warning; blinded by a passion which knew no discretion, he was even so imprudent as to denounce his friend to her, as one who endeavoured to obstruct their loves.

It was now attempted to move the King, to favour a project of nullifying the premature marriage of the Earl and Countess. By the assistance of the Earl of Northampton, grand-uncle to the lady, and a most confidential minister, Rochester succeeded in convincing the easy monarch, that such an arrangement would be alike gratifying to all parties concerned; and James lost no time in ordering the Bishops to take the necessary steps. A more abominable, more unjustifiable case, never, perhaps, came before that venerable body. Yet, such was the influence of the court, that little difficulty was experienced in carrying it through; Abbot, the puritanical Archbishop of Canterbury, being almost the only judge who expressed any reluctance. The whole proceedings were of a nature too horrible to be touched upon, even in the slightest manner, in a publication of the nineteenth century; but they may be found related in the

prints of the time, with a minuteness, which communicates a most painful impression of the inelegance of public taste during the reign of James.

Before this was effected, Rochester had so far given way to the vindictive feelings of his paramour, as to excite the King's resentment against Overbury, and cause him to be thrown into the Tower. Not content with that revenge, which did not ensure the guilty pair against the danger which was to be dreaded from his disclosing any of their secrets, they conspired to have him cut off by poison. For this purpose, they changed the Lieutenant of the Tower for one of their own creatures, and appointed a number of infamous wretches to attend in subordinate capacities upon their victim, and causing the unhappy man to be denied intercourse with every other person. When things were in proper train, they proceeded to administer to him all kinds of slow poisons, and other appliances calculated to leave no external mark upon the body: his food, his linen, almost the air which he breathed, were tainted with these horrid stuffs; even his salt, as we are told by Wilson, being mingled with white mercury. For several months, nature resisted every effort with more or less success; and the unfortunate prisoner, though almost borne to the earth with the horrors of his situation, and with the pain he suffered, continued to mock the wretched pair with continued life. But they at length became tired of feeble applications, and caused an effectual dose to be administered to him. His body, ulcerated to a degree which made it horrible to be looked on, was then thrown in a loose sheet into a coffin, and hastily buried in the

Tower, to prevent the public, if possible, from raising any rumours about the mystery of his death. It is dreadful to think that, besides the two lovers, who had at least the imperfect excuse of an overpowering passion for this act, the Earl of Northampton, a cool aged statesman, with no other cause for antipathy to Overbury than a sympathy with his kinswoman, or a wish to her exaltation, was also concerned in it. When we find persons in this rank guilty of such crimes, we are tempted to characterize the age when they occurred as being one of extraordinary vice; but we should bear in mind, that the generality of the public, instead of assenting to the commission of such barbarities, visited them, when they came to light, with the loudest reprobation.

The death of Overbury took place on the 15th of September, 1613; and, on the 26th of the subsequent December, Rochester and his mistress performed their nuptials under circumstances of splendour, and apparent felicity, beyond all parallel; the city of London vying with the King and his court, which should contribute most effectually to flatter the lovers with their sympathy and applause. That the Countess might experience no declension of title by her new alliance, James created her husband Earl of Somerset; the title by which he is best remembered in history. It is recorded of her, as a notable instance of impudence, that at her marriage she appeared with her hair hanging loose over a white dress; by which device, as it was usually displayed by women married for the first time, she thought to out-brazen or confound the popular rumours.

CHAPTER VII.

DUELLING—STORY OF THE LADY ARABELLA—FALL OF SOMERSET.

1613—1616.

If James's reign was undistinguished by foreign war, it was not without the evil, probably a natural consequence of such a state of things, an extraordinary propensity to private contentions. Sir Richard Steele remarked, in the reign of Queen Anne, one hundred years after the period under review, that he never saw the young men wear such long swords, or assume such a swaggering air, as for some years after the peace of Utrecht. Just so it was in the reign of the peaceful James, when the streets of the metropolis were infested, by day and night, with gallants calling themselves Roaring Boys, Boneventors, Bravadoes, Quarters, and such epithets; who, being always in the way of provoking quarrels, and never going without weapons, were perpetually falling into bloody rencounters, often of fatal termination; for which James's feeble government could provide neither remedy nor punishment.* It was remarked, that

* Narrative History of the First Fourteen Years of King James, *ad initium*.

these collisions were now the oftener fatal, that the native weapons of broadsword and buckler, used in the reign of Elizabeth, were exchanged by the pretty fellows of this more giddy-paced age, for the comparatively mischievous rapier, which had recently been imported from France.

This unfortunate disposition of the age was not exemplified by street brawls alone; nor was it confined to the mere youth of the metropolis. Fomented by that ridiculously nice system of honour which Touchstone hits off so neatly, it displayed itself in a number of set duels, which generally ended with an amount of bloodshed, fearfully disproportioned to the original cause of quarrel. It would almost appear that the King's subjects had conspired to atone, in the eyes of foreign nations, for the timorous character of their sovereign; or, as others might interpret it, that they were so much disgusted with his pusillanimity, as to fly, for their own satisfaction, to the extreme of the opposite fault. Thus, we find Lord Herbert of Cherbury, when in attendance on a French embassy, rush into mortal quarrel with a gentleman of that nation, for refusing to restore a top-knot which he had plucked in sport from the head-dress of a young lady: afterwards, he challenged the governor of a continental town, for some slight incivility in the way of his duty, and expressed great regret when the dignitary pleaded exemption from the *duellium* on account of his office. In another part of the self-written memoirs of the same person, we find him rise up in the midst of a large party of Dutchmen, among whom he happened to sit in a public room, and dare the whole, one after

another, to deadly fight, for simply talking a few light words of the King of Great Britain.

Sir Hatton Cheek, second in command of the English who assisted the Netherlands in recovering the town of Juliers from the Spaniards (1609), having said something in a testy manner to Sir Thomas Ditton, one of his captains, the latter took it up hotly, and returned as bold an answer as his circumstances would permit; telling Cheek, moreover, that he should soon break the bond which, for the present, compelled him to obedience, and vindicate himself in another place. Having then quitted the army, Ditton returned home, and proceeded, in the approved style of that age, to lash up the fury of his antagonist, by talking despitefully of him in public. When this came to the ears of Cheek, he happened to be sick from the effects of the siege; but he was no sooner able to walk than he wrote to Ditton, desiring a meeting with him, that he might give satisfaction for the calumnies he had propagated. As duelling was a dangerous proceeding in England, on account of the King's displeasure, the two met, with their seconds, on the sands of Calais; where they were no sooner stripped, than, without making the least attempt at sword-play, they rushed blindly on each other's weapons, with which they were in an instant mutually transfixed. As a contemporary historian remarks, they did not, in this encounter, seem to wish to kill each other, so much as they appeared to 'strive who should first die.' * Their swords being fastened in each other's bodies, they stabbed each other in the back

* Wilson.

with their daggers, 'locking themselves up,' to use the phrase of the same writer, 'as it were with four bloody keys; which the seconds fairly opened, and would fain have closed up the bleeding difference: but Cheek's wounds were deadly, which he finding, grew the violenter against his enemy; and Ditton, seeing him begin to stagger, went back from his prey, only defending himself, till the other, his rage being weakened by loss of blood, without any more hurt, fell at his feet. Ditton,' continues the same authority, 'with much difficulty recovered from his wounds; but Cheek, by his servants, had a sad funeral, which is the bitter fruit of fiery passions.'

Regarding the following other instance, a modern writer has remarked: 'Slugs and a saw-pit have been often mentioned; but I believe this is the only instance in which the latter has been really chosen as a scene of combat. Sir Thomas Compton, younger brother of Lord Compton, was a gentleman of so little irritability of temper, or rather perhaps of such a timid nature, as to avoid every occasion of quarrel which his contemporaries were in general so glad to seize. This, becoming known, was soon attended with the effects which might have been expected from it in such a society; and Compton was triumphed over and insulted by every Boabadil and Colepepper who haunted the court. 'Among the rest, one Bird, a *roaring captain*, gave him provocations so great, that some of Compton's friends taking notice of him, told him it were better to die nobly once, than live infamously ever; which wrought so upon his cold temper, that, the next affront this bold Bird put upon him, he was heartened

into the courage to send him a challenge. Bird, a great massy fellow, confident of his own strength (disdaining Compton, being less both in stature and in courage), told the second that brought the challenge, in a vapouring manner, that he would not stir a foot to encounter Compton, unless he would meet him in a saw-pit, where he might be sure Compton would not run away from him. The second, that looked upon this as a rhodomontade fancy, told him, that if he would appoint the place, Compton should not fail to meet him. Bird, making choice both of the place and weapon (which in the vain formality of fighters was in the election of the challenged), he chose a saw-pit and a single sword; where, according to the time appointed, they met. Being together in the pit, with swords drawn, and stript ready for the encounter, "Now, Compton," said Bird, "thou shalt not escape from me;" and, hovering his sword over his head in a disdainful manner, said, "Come, Compton, let's see what you can do now." Compton, attending his business with a watchful eye, seeing Bird's sword hovering over him, ran under it, in upon him, and in a moment run him through the body; so that his pride did fall upon the ground, and there sprawl out its last vanity; which should teach us, that strong presumption is the greatest weakness, and it's far from wisdom in the most arrogant strength to slight and disdain the meanest adversary.' *

But by far the most remarkable instance of duelling which took place in this reign, was that of Lord Bruce of Kinloss and Sir Edward Sack-

* Wilson.

ville, which has been commemorated in the Guardian by Steele, and is perhaps the most interesting duel on record. Lord Bruce was a young Scottish nobleman, the son and heir of the sagacious statesman of the same title, whose services were of such avail in securing James his English inheritance. Sir Edward Sackville was younger brother of the Earl of Dorset, grandson of the first Earl, so distinguished as a poet and as a statesman, and grandfather to the late poetical Earl, who shone in the court of Charles II. The cause of quarrel is supposed to have been the dishonour which Sackville brought upon Lord Bruce's sister, in consequence of an illicit amour. What gives greater interest to the circumstances, the two young men had formerly been remarked as attached friends. In January 1613, we find King James taking notice of their quarrel, and endeavouring to restore amity, but in vain. After having several times met and insulted each other, they had a rencontre at Canterbury, in May, when attending the Elector Palatine on his departure from the country; and Sackville, who had surrendered his weapon immediately before to the Elector, gave Bruce several blows on the face, but was immediately after induced, by the noblemen present, to profess a reconciliation with his adversary. Bruce is said by one authority to have then gone abroad to learn the use of the small sword; * from whence he soon after, according to another authority, wrote a challenge to Sackville, desiring him to come and take death from his hand;' for 'such killing civilities,' remarks Wilson, 'did this age produce!'

* Letter of Mr Chamberlain, in Winwood's Memorials.

The real letter, however, which is as follows, does not contain any such phrase.

'A MONSIEUR MONSIEUR SACKVILLE.

'I that am in France hear how much you attribute to yourself in this time, that I have given the world leave to ring your praises. * * * * If you call to memory, whereas I gave you my hand last, I told you I reserved the heart for a truer reconciliation. Now be that noble gentleman my love once spoke you, and come and do him right that could recite the trials you owe your birth and country, were I not confident your honour gives you the same courage to do me right, that it did to do me wrong. Be master of your own weapons and time; the place wheresoever I will wait on you. By doing this you will shorten revenge, and clear the idle opinion the world hath of both our worths. 'EDW. BRUCE.'

The second article in this correspondence, which, as the writer in the Guardian has remarked, is characterized by singular spirit and greatness of mind, is as follows:—

'A MONS. MONSIEUR LE BARON DE KINLOS.

'As it shall be always far from me to seek a quarrel, so will I always be ready to meet with any that desire to make trial of my valour by so fair a course as you require. A witness whereof yourself shall be, who, within a month, shall receive a strict account of time, place, and weapon; where you shall find me ready disposed to give you honourable satisfaction by him that shall con-

duct you thither. In the mean time, be as secret of the appointment, as it seems you are desirous of it. 'ED. SACKVILLE.'

Accordingly, Sackville soon after writes this second letter to Bruce:—

'A MONS. MONSIEUR LE BARON DE KINLOS.

'I am ready at Tergoes, a town in Zealand, to give you that satisfaction which your sword can render you, accompanied with a worthy gentleman for my second, in degree a knight; and for your coming I will not limit you to a peremptory day, but desire you to make a definite and speedy repair for your own honour, and fear of prevention, until which time you shall find me there.

'ED. SACKVILLE.'

To this Lord Bruce returned the following laconic answer:—

'A MONS. MONSIEUR SACKVILLE.

'I have received your letter by your man, and acknowledge you have dealt nobly with me, and now I come with all possible haste to meet you.

'ED. BRUCE.'

The combat, with all its sanguinary horrors and fatal conclusion, may be best related in the words of Sackville, the survivor; as given, in a letter to a courtier, soon after the event.

'Worthy Sir; As I am not ignorant, so I ought to be sensible of the false aspersions some authorless tongues have laid upon me, in the report of

the unfortunate passage lately happened between the Lord Bruce and myself, which as they are spread here, so may I justly fear they reign also where you are. There are but two ways to resolve doubts of this nature; by oath, or by sword. The first is due to magistrates, and communicable to friends; the other to such as maliciously slander and impudently defend their aspersion. Your love, not my merit, assures me you hold me your friend, which esteem I am much desirous to retain. Do me, therefore, the right to understand the truth of that; and in my behalf inform others, who either are or may be infected with sinister rumours, much prejudicial to that fair opinion I desire to hold amongst all worthy persons. And on the faith of a gentleman, the relation I shall give is neither more nor less than the bare truth. The enclosed contains the first citation, sent me from Paris by a Scotch gentleman, who delivered it to me in Derbyshire, at my father-in-law's house. After it follows my then answer, returned him by the same bearer. The next is my accomplishment of my first promise, being a particular assignation of place and weapons, which I sent by a servant of mine, by post from Rotterdam, as soon as I landed there. The receipt of which, joined with an acknowledgment of my too fair carriage to the deceased lord, is testified by the last, which periods the business till we met at Tergoes in Zealand, it being the place allotted for rendezvous; where he, accompanied with one Mr Crawford, an English gentleman, for his second, a surgeon, and a man, arrived with all speed he could. And there having rendered himself, I addressed my second, Sir John Heidon, to let him understand,

that now all following should be done by consent, as concerning the terms whereon we should fight, as also the place. To our seconds we gave power for their appointments, who agreed we should go to Antwerp, from thence to Bergen-op-Zoom, where, in the midway, but a village divides the States' territories from the Archduke's. And there was the destined stage, to the end that, having ended, he that could, might presently exempt himself from the justice of the country, by retiring into the dominion not offended. It was farther concluded, that, in case any should fall or slip, that then the combat should cease, and he whose ill fortune had so subjected him, was to acknowledge his life to have been in the other's hands. But, in case one party's sword should break, because that could only chance by hazard, it was agreed that the other should take no advantage, but either then be made friends, or else upon even terms go to it again. Thus, these conclusions being each of them related to his party, was by us both approved, and assented to. Accordingly, we embarked for Antwerp. And by reason, as I conceive, he could not handsomely without danger of discovery, he had not paired the sword I sent him to Paris; bringing one of the same length, but twice as broad; my second excepted against it, and advised me to match my own, and send him the choice, which I obeyed; it being, you know, the challenger's privilege to elect his weapon. At the delivery of the swords, which was performed by Sir John Heidon, it pleased the Lord Bruce to choose my own, and then, past expectation, he told him that he found himself so far behind-hand, as a little of my blood would not serve his turn; and therefore he

was now resolved to have me alone, because he knew (for I will use his own words) "that so worthy a gentleman, and my friend, could not endure to stand by and see him do that which he must, to satisfy himself and his honour." Hereupon, Sir John Heidon replied, that such intentions were bloody and butcherly, far unfitting so noble a personage, who should desire to bleed for reputation, not for life; withal adding, he thought himself injured, being come thus far, now to be prohibited from executing those honourable offices he came for. The Lord, for answer, only re-iterated his former resolutions; whereupon, Sir John leaving him the sword he had elected, delivered me the other, with his determinations. The which, not for matter but manner, so moved me, as though to my remembrance I had not for a long while eaten more liberally than at dinner, and therefore unfit for such an action, (seeing the surgeons hold a wound upon a full stomach more dangerous than otherwise), I requested my second to certify him, I would presently decide the difference, and therefore he should presently meet me on horseback, only waited on by our surgeons, they being unarmed. Together we rode, but one before the other some twelve score, about some two English miles; and then, passion having so weak an enemy to assail as my discretion, easily became victor, and using his power made me obedient to his commands. I being verily mad with anger, that the Lord Bruce should thirst after my life with a kind of assuredness, seeing I had come so far and needlessly, to give him leave to regain his lost reputation. I bade him alight, which with all willingness he quickly granted, and there in a meadow, ancle-deep in water at

the least, bidding farewell to our doublets, in our shirts began to charge each other; having afore commanded our surgeons to withdraw themselves a pretty distance from us, conjuring them besides, as they respected our favours, or their own safeties, not to stir, but suffer us to execute our pleasure; we being fully resolved (God forgive us!) to dispatch each other by what means we could; I made a thrust at my enemy, but was short; and, in drawing back my arm, I received a great wound thereon, which I interpreted as a reward for my short shooting; but in revenge I pressed in to him, though I then missed him also, and received a wound in my right pap, which passed level through my body, and almost to my back. And there we wrestled for the two greatest and dearest prizes we could ever expect trial for, honour and life. In which struggling, my hand, having but an ordinary glove upon it, lost one of her servants, though the meanest, which hung by a skin, and to sight remaineth as before, and I am put in hope one day to recover the use of it again. But at last, breathless, yet keeping our holds, there passed on both sides propositions of quitting each others' sword. But when amity was dead, confidence could not live; and who should quit first was the question; which on neither part either would perform; and restriving again afresh, with a kick and a wrench I freed my long captive weapon. Which incontinently levying at his throat, being master still of his, I demanded if he would ask his life, or yield his sword; both which, though in that imminent danger, he bravely denied to do. Myself being wounded, and feeling loss of blood, having three conduits running on me, which began to make me

faint; and he courageously persisting not to accord to either of my propositions; through remembrance of his former bloody desire, and feeling of my present estate, I struck at his heart, but with his avoiding missed my aim, yet passed through the body, and drawing out my sword repassed it again, through another place, when he cried, "Oh! I am slain!" seconding his speech with all the force he had to cast me. But being too weak, after I had defended his assault, I easily became master of him, laying him on his back; when being upon him, I re-demanded if he would request his life; but it seemed he prized it not at so dear a rate to be beholden for it; bravely replying, "he scorned it." Which answer of his was so noble and worthy, as I protest I could not find in my heart to offer him any more violence, only keeping him down until at length his surgeon afar off, cried, "he would immediately die if his wounds were not stopped." Whereupon, I asked if he desired his surgeon should come, which he accepted of; and so being drawn away, I never offered to take his sword, accounting it inhuman to rob a dead man, for so I held him to be. This thus ended, I retired to my surgeon, in whose arms after I had remained a while, for want of blood I lost my sight, and withal, as I then thought, my life also. But strong water and his diligence quickly recovered me; when I escaped a great danger. For my Lord's surgeon, when nobody dreamt of it, came full at me with his Lord's sword; and had not mine, with my sword, interposed himself, I had been slain by those base hands; although my Lord Bruce, weltering in his blood, and past all expectation of life, conformable to all his former carriage

which was undoubtedly noble, cried out, "Rascal, hold thy hand!" So may I prosper as I have dealt sincerely with you in this relation; which I pray you, with the enclosed letter, deliver to my lord chamberlain. And so, &c.

'Yours,

'EDWARD SACKVILLE.'

'*Louvain, the 8th of Sept.* 1613.'

Such was the duel of Edward Lord Bruce and Sir Edward Sackville, an incident which, for a time, created a sensation throughout the better part of Europe, and of which the relation can hardly yet be read without exciting feelings of the most painful nature. 'The dignity of wrath,' remarks the Guardian, 'and the cool and deliberate preparation which they made, by passing different climes and waiting convenient seasons for murdering each other, must raise in the reader as much compassion as horror;' while 'the gallant behaviour of the combatants may excite in our minds a yet higher detestation of that false honour which robs our country of men so fitted to support and adorn it.' Whatever impression Lord Bruce's conduct and death might make upon Sackville for the time, it would appear to have soon worn off; for within three months of the date of the conflict, we find him at home, mingling in the festivities of the court—not, however, with the countenance of the sovereign. A private letter informs us, that in November subsequent to the duel, he offered himself to perform in a court masque; which was wondered at, 'considering how little gracious he is, and that he hath been assaulted once or twice

since his return.' He had actually caused his name to be put down in the list of performers; but it was erased, probably by command of the King. The remains of the unfortunate Bruce were interred in the church of Bergen-op-Zoom, except his heart. That membrane, which had beat with such fierce and lofty sentiments, was embalmed and sent home, to be deposited in the family burial-vault at Culross Abbey in Scotland, where it was discovered about twenty years ago, in the silver case of its own shape in which it had been placed, and still in a state of preservation.

The progress of events at this period of English history, instead of resembling, as it sometimes does, the hurrying march of mists which passes athwart a wintry sky, may rather be likened to the infrequent and slow transit of a few light clouds, which enter the peaceful amphitheatre of the summer heavens, individually and at different places, and, after wandering idly here and there, as if unconnected with all surrounding objects, at last decline notelessly once more beneath the horizon. Passing over a number of such unimportant incidents, mention may be made of the unhappy story of the personage noted in James's history under the name of the Lady Arabella. This was the only child of Charles, Earl of Lennox, a younger brother of Lord Darnley; of course, cousin-german to King James. She had been depressed, and prevented from marrying, by Elizabeth, from a fear on the part of that princess, that her offspring might produce some disturbances, by pretending to the crown. James, who had the same reason for dreading any connection she might form (seeing that, in the eyes of many, his Scottish

birth was a circumstance that postponed his claim of blood to that of Arabella, a native of England,) treated her with high place and honour in his court, but let her know that she should never marry without exciting his highest displeasure. She was at length so imprudent as to form a clandestine union with a young scion of the nobility, Mr William Seymour, younger son to Lord Beauchamp, son of the Earl of Hertford. The consequence was, that James committed the lady to confinement in a private house, and Seymour to the Tower; where he was addressed with the following punning distich, by Andrew Melville, the celebrated Scottish polemic, who was confined in this prison for some turbulent proceedings in his native country.

> 'Communis tecum mihi causa est carceris; Ara-
> Bella tibi causa est, Araque sacra mihi.'

After a twelvemonth's confinement, the two lovers found means to make their escape, but were re-taken and placed in the Tower, though not till they had gone through a variety of strange adventures. What is remarkable, Prince Henry was as anxious to restrain and separate this unfortunate couple as the King, believing that their having legitimate offspring could only be the means of disturbing future successions. The Lady Arabella, after enduring for four years a confinement which might perhaps be justifiable on principles of state policy, but which certainly was a flagrant violation of the privileges common to man in all conditions of life, and under all governments, died in the Tower, September 1615, and was buried in a private manner. Her husband afterwards be-

came Marquis of Hertford, and distinguished himself much on the Cavalier side in the Civil War.

The pleasing task now occurs, of recording the fall of Somerset and his guilty mate. For some months after their marriage, which, as will be remembered, took place in December 1613, the slight suspicions of the public regarding Overbury's murder were successfully repressed by the care of the Earl and his creatures, and he continued still to reign peerless in the royal favour. In July 1614, when the Earl of Suffolk was promoted from the office of Lord Chamberlain to that of Lord Treasurer, the vacant place was filled by his son-in-law; James saying to him, as he conferred the staff, 'Lo here, friend Somerset,' and immediately after telling the courtiers that he had given it to the man 'whom, of all men living, he most cherished.' A month, however, had scarcely elapsed after this elevation, when James saw, at Apthorp, George Villiers, a younger son of a Leicestershire gentleman, with whose ingenious and beautiful face he was much struck. A party of courtiers seem to have conceived, from this, the idea of ousting Somerset by means of a rival in the King's affections—one nail, as they said, to drive out another; and they forthwith began to patronise a young man, the superiority of whose external appearance promised to be so effectual in securing that object. According to the satiric Weldon, 'one gave him his place of cup-bearer, that he might be in the King's eye; another sent to his mercer and tailor to put good clothes upon him; a third to his sempstress for curious linen, and all as incomes to obtain promotion upon his future rise; then others took upon them to be his

bravoes, to undertake his quarrels, upon affronts put upon him by Somerset's faction: so all hands helped to the pieceing up of this new favourite.' At the head of the party was the same puritanical archbishop who had resisted the process of divorce in favour of Lady Essex: he gave, at a later period of life, some curious particulars regarding Villiers' rise, which prove highly illustrative of the motley character of King James.

His Majesty 'had a fashion,' says Abbot, 'that he would never admit any to nearness about himself, but such a one as the Queen should commend to him, and make some suit on his behalf; that if the Queen afterwards, being ill treated, might complain of this dear one, he might make this answer, "It is all along of yourself, for you were the party that commended him unto me." Our old master took delight in things of this nature.

'That noble Queen, who now resteth in heaven, knew her husband well, and, having been bitten with favourites both in Scotland and England, was very shy to adventure upon this request. King James, in the mean time, more and more loathed Somerset, and did not much conceal that his affection increased towards the other. But the Queen would not come to it, albeit divers lords did earnestly solicit her Majesty thereto.' She replied to all their entreaties, that, supposing Villiers to be fully ingratiated with the King, his first object would be to destroy the individuals who had assisted in his advancement.

The persons chiefly concerned in this scheme, were of the families of Herbert, Hertford, and Bedford; and they are said to have arranged their plans at a great but private entertainment at Bay-

nard's Castle. In going to the place of meeting, one of the party is reported to have caused his servant to throw a handful of dirt at a picture of Somerset, which was hung out at a stall; a sort of public defiance of the favourite.* Although the Queen was at first unwilling to be concerned in their project, she afterwards condescended to lend her assistance; and, accordingly, it was in her bed-chamber, and with the sword of her favourite son Charles, that James, on the 23d of April 1615, knighted the new favourite, with a pension of 1000*l.* a year; making him next day a gentleman of his own bed-chamber, although Somerset used every entreaty to have him only made a groom. At this early period of his history, Villiers displayed nearly the same amiable qualities which had characterized Somerset before his connection with the Countess of Essex, and was in every respect equally worthy of the King's regard. It is curious to see how he was congratulated by the peers and great officers of state on his good fortune—how even the King himself desired him to be thankful to God for having made him so acceptable to his affections. He was a young man of still greater beauty of exterior than Somerset. The good looks of that personage were of rather too robust a description. Those of Villiers were soft and angelic. James conferred upon him the familiar nick-name of *Steenie*, from an idea that his gentle regular features resembled those usually given, by Roman Catholic painters, to St Stephen, the proto-martyr.

When Somerset saw that he was nearly on the

* Heylin's Aulicus Coquinariæ.

point of being disgraced, he resolved to make use of what yet remained to him of the King's affection, to procure a full pardon of all past offences; the same device which the Earl of Morton had tried, thirty-five years before, in Scotland. James is said to have been so weak as actually to sign such a pardon; which, if the seal had been attached to it, must have disconcerted all the efforts now making by his enemies to punish him for Overbury's murder. Fortunately, however, they succeeded in intercepting the document before it passed the seal.

Historians are puzzled by the various ways in which the discovery of Somerset's guilt is described by different writers of the time. But the simple fact seems to be, that his enemies were for a long time in possession of sufficient evidence against him, and only waited till they conceived themselves to be sufficiently powerful to denounce him to the King. This was not till August 1615, a full twelvemonth after James had first seen Villiers: so long was he in supplanting the old love effectually with the new!

It may be readily supposed, from the timid character of the monarch, that he would not, with a very good grace, surrender to public justice, a man who had acquired so complete an ascendant over him as Somerset. Accordingly we find, in the behaviour ascribed to him on the occasion by historians, a strange conflict betwixt his habitual love of justice, or, as it may be called, abstract humanity, and that peculiar impotence, under which he lay all his life, of denouncing vice as it ought to be denounced, when found in those he loved. He was on a hunting excursion at Roy-

ston, at the time when the enemies of Somerset found it prudent to make his crimes known. The Earl was in company with the King, it being their intention to part next day, the former for London, the second for Newmarket. On Sir Ralph Winwood disclosing to James the story of Somerset's guilt, he was sincerely and greatly surprised, but felt at the same time so proper an indignation at the offence, as to write off immediately to Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice, for a warrant to apprehend the criminal. A more decisive monarch would have at once ordered the minion to be put under arrest; but James, whose mind proceeded in almost all matters in the same circular and shambling fashion with his body, preferred having the ends of justice accomplished by a sort of ambuscade. He is even said to have been found next day, when the warrant arrived, lolling upon Somerset's shoulders as usual, and talking to him in his customary tender style; being at the moment in the act of bidding him farewell, preparatory to his departure for London. When the warrant was presented to the Earl, he exclaimed, that never was such an affront offered to a peer of England in the presence of the King, and he boldly claimed his royal master's protection. "Nay, man," said the King, "if Coke were to send for me, I must needs go too;" and, as soon as the unhappy man had turned his back, he added, with a smile, "Now, the devil go with thee; I shall never see thy face more!" *

* It can only be said, in favour of the King at this point of his history, that there is no authentic account of his behaviour on the arrest of Somerset, and the above is by no means likely to be very correct. Another story,

To prevent any of the Earl's accomplices from taking alarm at his own apprehension, they were all seized nearly about the same time with himself. On his reaching London, he found the Countess already under arrest. * No time was lost in bringing the inferior agents to trial. Weston, a wretch who had been keeper of the unfortunate Overbury's prison, and superintended his murder, was the first; he was tried, found guilty, and immediately executed at Tyburn, though not till he had

different in particulars, is given by Sir Anthony Weldon, who represents the King as parting with Somerset before the arrest, and as sustaining, throughout the scene of leave-taking, all his usual kindness of manner and expression. 'Nor must I forget,' says this writer, 'to let you know how perfect the King was in the art of dissimulation, or, to give it his own phrase, *king-craft*. The Earl of Somerset never parted from him with more seeming affection than at this time, when he knew Somerset should never see him more; and had you seen that seeming affection (as the author himself did), you would rather have believed he was in his rising than setting. When the Earl kissed his hand, the King hung about his neck, slabbering his cheeks, saying, "For God's sake, when shall I see thee again? On my soul, I shall neither eat nor sleep until you come again." The Earl told him on Monday (this being Friday). "For God's sake, let me," said the King—"Shall I? Shall I?"—then lolled about his neck. "Then, for God's sake, give thy lady this kiss for me." In the same manner at the stairs head, at the middle of the stairs, and at the stairs foot. The Earl was not in his coach, when the King used these very words (in the hearing of four servants, of whom one was Somerset's great creature, of the bedchamber, and reported it instantly to the author of this history), "I shall never see his face more."—*Court of King James.*

* October 18, 1615. The Earl of Northampton had escaped the consequences of his accession to the crime, by dying the year before.

confessed enough to criminate his associates. The next that suffered was Mrs Turner, a beautiful but unprincipled young widow, who had condescended, for the sake of subsistence to herself and children, to become the counsellor and assistant of the Countess, through the whole story of her complicated guilt. A third sufferer was Sir Jervis Elwes, lieutenant of the Tower, who was found guilty of fore-knowing the murder; and the list was closed by Franklin, the apothecary who supplied the various poisons. As all these culprits were executed within six weeks of the date of Somerset's arrest, we may suppose the King to have been at first inspired with a sincere wish to satisfy public justice for Overbury's death.

That he was so, is rendered the more likely by an anecdote told of him by Weldon, and which is not greatly discountenanced by writers of better authority. As soon as he knew the circumstances of Overbury's case, of which he had hitherto, of course, been kept entirely ignorant by Somerset, he summoned the judges to Royston, and there, kneeling down, with his courtiers and servants around him, [a favourite fashion of his, since he did the same thing after he was delivered from the Gowry conspirators], 'he used,' says Weldon, 'these very words:' "My lords, the judges, it is lately come to my hearing, that you have now in examination a business of poisoning. Lord, in what a most miserable condition shall this kingdom be, (the only famous nation for hospitality in the world), if our tables shall become such a snare, as none could eat without danger of life, and that Italian custom should be introduced amongst us! Therefore, my lords, I charge you,

as you will answer it, at that great and dreadful day of judgment, that you examine it strictly, without favour, affection, or partiality; and if you shall spare any guilty of this crime, God's curse light on you and your posterity; and if I spare any that are found guilty, God's curse light on me and my posterity for ever!" This solemn imprecation he observed carefully, in so far as all the subordinate instruments were concerned: we are now to see how he attended to it, when doom was called for against the principals.

The Earl and Countess of Somerset were confined in private houses all winter; and it was not till spring was far advanced, that they were committed to the Tower. When the lady was conducted thither, (March 27, 1616,) 'she did passionately deprecate and entreat the lieutenant, that she might not be lodged in Sir Thomas Overbury's lodging; so that he was fain to remove himself out of his own chamber for three nights, till Sir Walter Raleigh's lodging' (just vacated, in consequence of that knight's release) 'might be furnished and made fit for him.'* At her arraignment, which took place about two months after, and at which, strange to say, her first husband Essex chose to be present, were displayed all her letters to the pretended magician whom she employed to bewitch Car to love her, as also a number of waxen and leaden images, like puppets, which that artist had used in her service, the most of them too indecent to be described. Such circumstances give a strange view of the superstitions, and of the rude taste of the age; but they are surpassed in curio-

* Winwood.

sity, by the consequences of a simple incident which took place in the court:—While the letters and puppets were passing about, for the entertainment of the audience, a loud crack was heard from one of the scaffolds, 'which caused great fear, tumult, and confusion among the spectators, and throughout the hall; every one fearing hurt, as if the devil had been present, and grown angry to have his workmanship shown by such as were not his scholars.'* The trial of the Countess took place on the 23d of May; when 'she won pity,' says a narrator of passing events, 'by her demeanour, which, in my opinion, was more curious and confident than was fit for her, a lady in such distress; and yet she shed, or made show of, some tears, divers times.' It was a circumstance so singular as to excite remark, that no uncivil language was used by the court in conducting the proceedings against her; such having been the express command of the King.† She was also favoured by not having the axe carried before her. She pleaded guilty to a fore-knowledge and participation of the horrid crime laid to her charge; which, with her interesting appearance, and a consideration of the dignity of her family, induced the lords and judges to promise that they should intercede with the King for mercy.

Somerset was tried next day, and, pleading not guilty, made every effort to baffle the evidence

* Narrative History of the first Fourteen Years of King James.

† It was usual, in this age, for the judges to browbeat and vilify the prisoners during trial, as assuming that they were guilty. Coke's language to Sir Walter Raleigh is a noted instance.

brought against him. After a trial, however, of unusual duration, he was found guilty and condemned. The interest of the public on this occasion was uncommonly great; insomuch that ten shillings were given for a seat in the court, to witness the proceedings. What must have been a strange feature in the scene, the injured Earl of Essex stood over against the culprit, during the whole day, looking him full in the face.

The time was now arrived for the redemption of that promise, which James had in a manner given to the people of England, to have justice executed upon the criminals. From day to day, however, that justice was delayed. By and by, the Earl and Countess were allowed the liberty of occasionally meeting each other. Afterwards, they obtained what was called the freedom of the Tower; that is, permission to walk in certain courts within the fortress. Thus, in the course of a few months, the edge of the public appetite for vengeance against them, wore off. Finally, when other public matters had in a great measure taken attention from the guilty pair, they were pardoned, under the simple restriction of living ever after in close retirement. There is scarcely any way of palliating the misconduct of the King in this affair. Somerset and the Countess had only been led into crime by passions which do not in general assume a very dark complexion, love and ambition. It is also in some measure true, perhaps, that the death of Overbury by Somerset was only the accidental destruction of one bad man by another, a quarrel between accomplices. Yet something of the same kind may be said in favour of almost all criminals; and if we were always to set off the bad qualities which led

to crime against the good qualities which may coexist in the man who committed it, justice would be completely puzzled, and might never get a single victim. There seems to be no doubt that James, by the favour he showed to such atrocious criminals, before and after their guilt was discovered, degraded his court in the eyes of all the virtuous people of England, and fixed the darkest, though most unfounded suspicions, upon his own personal character. It may really be allowed that there was some occasion for the promise which Ben Jonson gave out in the Masque of the Golden Age Restored, performed at this time; where, after hinting allegorically at the horrid circumstances of the tale of Somerset, which might have been said to mark the age as one of *corrosive sublimate*, he adds—

> 'Jove therefore means to settle
> Astræa in her seat again,
> And let down, in her golden chain,
> An *age of better metal.*'

Somerset and his Countess afterwards dragged out a life more infamous and painful than the death which they ought to have suffered. The greater part of his estates were forfeited and bestowed upon the new favourite Villiers; although it is recorded, to the credit of that young man, that, when offered the manor of Sherborne, the best of all those pieces of property, he prayed the King not to build up his fortunes upon the ruin of another. The life of the miserable pair was, if possible, rendered more miserable by mutual upbraidings; for all real passion had sunk at the moment when neither could be advantaged by the other in matters of worldly fortune. After having lived for many years in the

same house, without even seeing or speaking to each other, the Countess died of a disease so lingering and loathsome, that its nature seemed a retribution for the death of Overbury, as well as a commentary on the infamous passion which had exercised so strong an influence over her conduct in youth. The Earl survived, an object of universal detestation, till July 1645; before which period, his daughter Anne, who was born while her mother was confined in the Tower, was married to William Lord Russel, son of the Earl of Bedford.

CHAPTER IX.

THE KING'S VISIT TO SCOTLAND.

1617.

THE present chapter is devoted to a more pleasant subject than the last—the visit, to wit, which James now paid, after an absence of fourteen years, to his native dominions. Before leaving that country, it will be recollected that he promised to revisit it once every three years—there being no sea, as he remarked, nor so much as a ferry, to make the journey either dangerous or difficult. On his reaching London, however, he soon found that the terraqueous nature of the way would be but an inadequate inducement to the performance of his promise. In the first place, there was no urgent necessity for the journey, because, as he himself used to boast, Scotland was now so quiet, that he could govern it with his pen. In the second place, the visit was likely to prove very expensive, both to himself, and to the people whom he went to see. His court was not now so easily moved about, as it had been during his Scottish reign; nor would his dignity permit him to appear without the full load of magnificence which he had been accustomed to bear since he came to England.

The secret cause which urged him, at this particular period, to visit Scotland, was a wish which he earnestly entertained, to complete that modification of ecclesiastical matters in the country, which he had commenced before he left it, and which seemed necessary to the production of what he called 'a grave, settled, well-ordered church, in obedience of God and the King.' In other words, having already restored consecrated bishops, he now proposed to introduce a moderate episcopacy into the worship and government of the Scotican church, and establish his supremacy over it, as it was in England. He had encountered great difficulties, ever since his accession to the English throne, in making the first moves towards this state of things in Scotland. But it seemed likely, that, if he went personally among the people, and with his own kingly countenance entreated them to yield to what he desired, they would sink, like Semele, beneath the splendours in which they saw their native and beloved sovereign appear, and awaken, after he retired, a peaceful and contented parallel to the obedient church of England.

The Scots, as if aware of their inability to stand out against the experiment he was about to make upon them, are said to have entreated him to defer his visit; stating that they had not been allowed sufficient time to prepare for his reception, but being in reality afraid of the effect which his presence in Scotland would have upon their church. It is certain that they openly expressed themselves aware of the real object of his journey; for he thought it necessary to publish a proclamation, assuring them that his visit was chiefly occasioned by what he was pleased to call 'a salmon-lyke in-

stinct—a great and natural longing to see our native soyle and place of our birth and breeding.' Perhaps, there was also some truth in what is reported of them by Mr Chamberlain, that, though disposed to do their *ultimo forzo* for his entertainment, they dreaded the magnitude of the expense, and would have been quite as well content to remain unblessed by 'the rays of his presence.' They might have heard of the baneful effects which his briefer trips through England generally produced;—a gentry retiring from their seats as he approached, to avoid the necessity of ruining themselves by his entertainment, while the commonality every where bewailed the low prices, and no prices, at which they were obliged to supply the court with provisions.*

James 'began his journey,' says Wilson, 'with the spring, warming the country, as he went, with the glories of the court; taking such recreations by the way, as might best beguile the days, and cut them shorter, but lengthen the nights (contrary to the seasons); for what with hawking, hunting, and horse-racing, the days quickly ran away, and the nights, with feasting, masqueing, and dancing, were the more extended. And the King had fit instruments for these sports about his person; as Sir George Goring, Sir Edward Touch, Sir John Finett, and others, that could fit and obtemperate the King's humour; for he loved such representations and disguises in their masquerades,

* The King was at considerable difficulty in raising a sum of money sufficient for his expenses on this journey. But for 100,000*l.*, which was lent to him by the citizens of London, he could not have accomplished it.

as were witty and sudden—the more ridiculous, the more pleasant.

And his new favourite, being an excellent dancer, brought that pastime into the greater request. * * * In this glory he visited Scotland with the King, and is made Privy Counsellor there. He now reigns sole in the monarch's affection; every thing he doth is admired for the doer's sake. No man dances better; no man runs or jumps better; and, indeed, he jumps higher than ever Englishman did in so short a time—from a private gentleman to a dukedom. But the King is not well without him, his company is his solace; and the Court Grandees cannot be well but by him; so that all addresses are made to him, either for place or office, in court or commonwealth.' Besides Villiers, who was now Earl of Buckingham, the King was attended by a small but select party of his favourite courtiers, among whom were three bishops.

He left London on the 15th of March, and proceeding by Theobald's, Roystoun, Huntingdon, and Grantham, reached Lincoln on the 27th. Here he was received in great state, and magnificently entertained for four days. 'On Wednesday, the second of April,' says an old manuscript history of Lincoln, * 'his Majesty did come in his caroch to the sign of the George by the Stanbowe, (the Stone Bow,) to see a cocking thear, where he appointed four cocks to be put on the pit together; *which made his Majestie very merrie.* From thence he went to the Spread Eagle, to see a prise plaied thear, by a fensor of the city, and a

* Quoted in Nichols.

servant to some attendant on the court, who made the challenge; where the fensor and the scholars of the city had the better; on which his Majestie called for his porter, who called for the sword and buckler, and gave and received a broken paite, and other bad hurts.' James expressed himself highly delighted with the country about Lincoln, and told the Mayor and Aldermen, when they kissed his hand at parting, 'that if God lent him life he would see them oftener.'

He spent the whole of April and the early part of May in a deliberate progress through the north of England; which we have the authority of Buckingham for stating that he enjoyed very highly. 'His Majesty,' says that person in a letter to Bacon, 'though he were a little troubled with a little pain in his back, which hindered his hunting, is now, God be thanked, very well, and as merry as ever he was; and we have all held out well.' In another letter, written at the end of April, he tells the Lord Chancellor, that 'his Majesty, God be thanked, is in very good health, and so well pleased with his journey, that I never saw him better, nor merrier.' It seems to have made little impression on the good-humoured monarch, habitually unregardful of sums, that, according to the report of a different attendant on the court, he was in great distress for want of money.

He arrived at Berwick about the tenth of May, and left it on the 13th. His first resting-place in Scotland was at Dunglass, the seat of his ancient and trusty counsellor the Earl of Home; where he was saluted with a long Latin speech, panegyrizing his ancestors and himself. He lodged on the evening of the 15th at Seaton, the seat

of George third Earl of Winteun, where he was presented with two long poems; the second of which was 'Forth Feasting,' by William Drummond of Hawthornden, justly styled by Lord Woodhouselee, 'one of the most elegant panegyrics ever addressed by a poet to a prince.'

Long before James had thus approached within one stage of Edinburgh, the authorities there had done everything in their power to prepare the city for his reception; and, assuredly, the characteristic anxiety of the Scottish nation to make themselves and their country bear a good appearance in the eyes of strangers, was now most abundantly and most ludicrously exemplified. So far back as the 22d of May, 1616, the Privy Council had issued a warrant to the Master of his Majesty's Works, to revise the palaces of Holyroodhouse, Stirling, and Falkland; 'to tak doun the haill rooffe and thak of the lodgeing above the utter yett, [of Holyroodhouse] called the Chancellares lodgeing, with sae meikle of the stane warke as is requisite, and caus the same be buildit up and perfyte of new; to tak doun to the grund the chalmer within the Pallace, callit the Stewartis Chalmer, and on nawayes to build up the same agayne, in respect of the deformitie and disproportion that it has to the rest of the building their; to tak doun the chalmer and galrie in Halirudhous callit Sir Roger Ashtons's chalmer, and to build up the same of new; to tak doun the kitching callit Chancellar Maitlands's Kitching, in the end of the transe called the Dukis Transe, bothe in the rooffe, jeists, and walls, as is necessar, and to build up the same of new; and to tak doun the toofalles [*projections*] in the Baikehous Yairde of

Haliradhous, and the hail dykis of the Baikhous Yairde, and not to big up the same agane, sus that of the yairde ane perfyte cloise may be maid;' with many similar reparations upon the two provincial palaces mentioned in the warrant. On the 24th of December, the same dignified body directed an order to the Magistrates of Edinburgh, commanding that, as 'the strangearis and otheris that ar to accompanay his Majestie heir, will be carefull narrowlie to remark upon and espy the carriage and conversation of the inhabitantis of the said toun, forme of their interteynment and ludgeing, and gif thair houses, and bedding, and naprie be neate and clene, and according as they sall find, will mak reporte outher to the credit, or the reproche and scandall of this burgh;' therefore they must see that the houses devoted to the accommodation of the strangers, be 'furnisht with *honest and clene bedding*, and weile washen and weile smellit naprie and otheris linningis, and with a sufficient number and quantitie of good vessells, cleane and cleare, and of sufficient lairgenes.' This precept orders that accommodation for five thousand persons be provided, that 'all staiblairis be furnisht with sufficiencie of corne, strae, and hay,' that the 'Magistratis haif a cair and gif directions for keeping of their streittis cleene, and that no filthe nor middingis * be seen upon the same, and that no beggaris be seen within thair boundis.'

The last matter touched upon in this edict, was too tender a subject, and one of too monstrous and dreadful a kind, to be thus lightly attended to.

* It may be as well not to furnish our English readers wth a key to this mysterious language.

On the same day with the edict, appeared an 'act aganist Beggaris,' composed in language which at once displays the horrid nature of the nuisance, and the anxiety of the Privy Council to have it huddled out of sight before 'the strangearis' should arrive. 'Forasmeikle,' says this act, 'as grete nomberis of strong, sturdy, and idill beggaris and vagaboundis daylie travellis athorte the countrey, and from all pairtis ewest to this Burgh of Edinburgh, quhair they pas the tyme in all kynd of ryott and filthie and beistlie litcherie, to the offens and displesour of God; as they do lykewise importune his nobilitie, counsellouris, and others his Majestie's goode subjectis, with *shamefull exclamationis and outcryis*, lyes upon the streitis of the Cannogait and betwin Leythe and Edinburgh; and it is lykeaneuch that, when his Majestie comes to this cuntrey this next sommer, they will follow his Majestie's courte, *to the greite discredite and disgrace of the cuntrey;* thairfore the Lords of Secreit Counsall ordanis lettres to be direct, to command, charge, and inhibite all and sindrie strong, sturdie, and idill beggaris be oppin proclamation at the Mercat Croces of the heade burghs of this realme, and other places needful, that none of thame presume to wander athorte the cuntrey;' and further, to prohibit all persons dwelling in or near Edinburgh from affording them lodgings, under the penalty of twenty pounds for each offence.'

The Privy Council still further evinced their anxiety regarding the proper reception of the King and Court, by issuing, on the 13th of February (1617), a 'proclamation anent ludgeings.' On their requesting the Magistrates of the Canongate to give in a roll of all the houses which could ac-

commodate any of the royal train, those dignitaries had informed them, that the whole, such as they were, had already been bespoken by 'noblemen, barونis, and gentlemen of this cuntrey, sua that thair wes not ane free house in the Cannogait, quhair ony of his Majestie's tryne might be ludgeat.' The purpose of this proclamation was to assure all such as 'hes tane, or myndis to tak ludgeings or stablis in the Cannogait,' that, as this is 'a matter verie offensive to his Majestie, and that can nowayis stand with his Majestie's contentment, nor the credit of the cuntrey, they will be frustrat and disappointit of thair intentis;' for, 'all the saidis ludgeings and stablis will be taine up and markit for his Majestie's awne tryne and followaris.' They likewise issued an edict for the preservation of 'muirfowl, pairtridges, and peuttis,' within ten miles of Edinburgh, that there might be no lack of sport for the King and his retinue.

The Corporation of Edinburgh displayed no less zeal in the duty of preparing for James's reception. On the 9th of April, we find the Town-council ordaining that 'ane number of the gravest most antient burgesses, and of best rank within this burgh, sall be warnit to attend his Majesties entrie within the samine, *all apparelit in black velvet*, the ane half in gownis faiced with black velvet, and the uther half in partisanis.' Soon after, learning that it was 'his Majesties will and plesour that ane harrang and speache be maid to him at his entrie,' they nominated their Clerk-depute 'to mak the said harrang, and provyde himself to that effect.' They also resolved upon giving the King a banquet, and ordered a ban-

queting-house to be built for the purpose. When they understood the King to have reached Berwick, they sent their clerk thither, to learn 'his Majesties will and plesour anent the maner of his ressait (reception) at his entrie within the burgh, and to give information to his Majestie of the order takin theranent be the Guid Toun.' Could it be, in consequence of any hint given on this occasion, that, two or three days after, they enacted the following? 'Understanding that the Kingis Majestie, at his first going to Ingland, was prepynit be the hail tounis throw which his Majestie raid, with ane coup with certaine quantity of gold, according to the estate and rank of the towns; and, siclyk, that the same tounis, at his Majesties doun-cumming, hes rememberit his Majestie with the lyk prepyne; to eschew any imputation of neglect or dewtie, this burgh, being the heid and principal of this kingdome, thocht meet to propyne his Majestie at his entrie, *with ten thousand merkis, in dowble angells of gold*, and to by ane gilt baissin of the grittest quantity can be had, to put the same in.'

These memorabilia are not more illustrative of the manners and customs of the age, than are some which follow regarding the actual event of the King's reception. He advanced from Seton on the 16th of May, and 'enterit at the West Poirt of Edinburgh, quhair the Provest, the four Bailyeis, the haill counsell of the toun, with ane hundreth honest men and mae, war all assemblit in blak gownes, all lynit with plane velvet, and thair haill apparell was plane velvet.' The Provost first made 'ane harrang' for himself; and then the clerk, 'in name of the haill citizens,'

began a speech, which, for hyperbolic flattery and euphuistic expression, surpasses, by the confession of Mr Nichols, all the speeches of a similar nature contained in his volumes. By the showing of this courtly speaker, the departure of James for England had been a kind of political sunset to Scotland; by that event the people were darkened, 'deepe sorrowe and feare possessing their herts, their places of solace only giving a new heate to the fever of the languishing remembrance of their former happiness; the verie hilles and groves, accustomed of before to be refreshed with the dewe of his Majesties presence,' ceased to put on 'their wonted apparell,' and 'with pale lookes represented thair miserie for the departure of their royal king.' This day, however, brought back 'our sunne,' in the 'royal countenance of our new Phœnix, the bright star of our northerne firmament, the ornament of our age;' and every thing is accordingly refreshed and revived. He begs pardon, *upon the very knees of his hart*, for presuming to speak before one who is 'formed by nature, and framed by education,' to be himself 'the perfection of all eloquence.' And, after a long tissue of extravagant adulation, during which he takes special notice of the peaceful nature of James's government, and of his zeal in behalf of the Protestant faith, which had 'battred and shaken the walles of Rome more than did the Goths and Vandals the old frame thereof by their sworde,' he throws the hearts of his constituents, one and all, at his Majestie's feet, along with their lives, goods, *liberties*, and whatsoever else is dear to them! 'Thereafter, ane purse containing five hundreth dowble angellis of gold, laid in a silver

basing dowble overgilt, was propynit to his Majestie, quha with ane myld and gracious countenance, resavit thame with thair propyne.' After being thus doubly regaled—with flattery and gold—the King passed along the streets to the church, where he stopped to hear a sermon by Spottiswood, Archbishop of St Andrews. As he afterwards passed to his palace, he knighted the Provost on the public street. A book of congratulatory verses by members of the University, was presented to him, along with a Latin speech, as he entered the palace court.

He was treated with a sumptuous banquet by the city of Edinburgh; but, as some weeks were yet to elapse before the meeting of Parliament, he soon after began a progress through some of the burghs to the north of the capital. A most amusing instance of the grotesque taste of the age occurred at his entry into the town of Linlithgow, his first stage from Edinburgh. One Wiseman, the schoolmaster of the burgh, stood at the end of the town, enclosed in a plaster which was made in the figure of a lion, and uttered the following rhymes, the composition of William Drummond:

'Thrice royal sir, here I do you beseech,
Who art a lion, to hear a lion's speech;
A miracle—for since the days of Æsop,
No lion till these times his voice dared raise up
To such a majesty; then, King of Men,
The King of Beasts speaks to thee from his den;
Who, though he now enclosed be in plaster,
When he was free, was Lithgow's wise schoolmaster.'

A more farcical incident does not occur throughout

the whole life of this farcical monarch—except, perhaps, one which is supposed to have taken place, as he was progressing, by Dunfermline, to Falkland. 'There is a tradition,* that James the Sixth, hunting in the neighbourhood of Dunfermline, invited the company then attending upon him to dine along with him at a *collier's house*, meaning the Abbey of Culross, then belonging to Sir George Bruce.† The works at Culross appear to have been in their most flourishing condition, a little before and some time after James's accession to the throne of England. They were then wrought a considerable way under the sea, or at least where the sea overflowed at full tide, and the coals were carried out to be shipped by a moat within the seamark, which had a subterraneous communication with the coal-pit. Being conducted by his own desire to see the works below ground, he was led insensibly by his host and guide to the moat above mentioned, it being then high water. Having ascended from the coal-pit, and seeing himself, without any previous intimation, surrounded by the sea, he was seized with an immediate apprehension of some plot against his liberty or life, and called out "Treason!" But his faithful guide quickly dispelled his fears, by assuring him that he was in perfect safety, and, pointing to an elegant pinnace, that was made fast to the moat, desired to know whether it was most agreeable to his Majesty to be carried ashore in it, or to return by the same

* Beauties of Scotland, iv. 293.

† Uncle to the unfortunate Lord Bruce of Kinloss, and a great coal-proprietor in the neighbourhood of Culross, the Abbey of which was his seat. The present Earl of Elgin is his descendant.

way he came; upon which the King, preferring the shortest way back, was carried directly ashore, expressing much satisfaction at what he had seen.'

He arrived at Falkland on the 19th of May, and once more enlivened, with the sounds of his hunting-horn, that noble park, which had been his favourite scene of amusement in youth. On the 22d, he went to Kinnaird, the seat of Sir John Livingston, where he spent eight days, probably in sylvan sports. On the 30th, he advanced to Dundee, and was welcomed by the town-clerk, in a panegyrical speech, and by two Latin poems. It was expected by the inhabitants of Aberdeen, that he would have graced their ancient and thriving city with a visit on this occasion; and they had made preparations accordingly. But the necessity of returning to Edinburgh, in time to prepare for the meeting of Parliament, prevented his Majesty from gratifying the worthy citizens. To compensate as far as possible for the want of his own presence, he sent them a large deputation of his retinue, all of whom were made burgesses, including Archy Armstrong, his jester—who, however, as a late writer remarks, 'was not dubbed a doctor.'

James was at Edinburgh on the 3rd of June, when the Earl of Buckingham wrote to the Lord Keeper Bacon: 'His Majesty, God be thanked, is very well, and safely returned from his hunting journey.' He spent the time between this date, and the 17th June, when the Parliament was to sit down, 'in consultations, by way of preparation, towards *his ends*—that is, to procure better maintenance than the ministry hath here, and some conformity between the churches of Scotland and Eng-

land in public service, whereof the first it is hard to guess the success, so many great men are interested in the tythes. Towards the other, his Majesty hath set up his chapel here, in like manner of service as it is in England, which is yet frequented well by the people of the country.' So says Sir Dudley Carleton, who acknowledges, at the same time, that 'we have here very kind and magnificent entertainment.' Sir Dudley, we suspect, gives rather too smooth an account of the establishment of the chapel. James had resolved, on this occasion, to plant such a place of worship beside his palace of Holyroodhouse, as might serve as a sort of pattern for the style of decoration and worship he wished to introduce into the churches of the land. He had previously sent an organ from London (which cost 400*l.*,) as well as portraits of the apostles and evangelists, for the adornment of the walls. These objects, however, were regarded with horror and alarm by the people, who were possessed by an idea that they were the harbingers of the restoration of Popery. We are told by James Howell, gravely or not, that the Scotch skipper who brought down the organ, conceived himself affected by a singing in his head for weeks after; and as for the singing boys which accompanied it, he is convinced that 'yf God and his angells at the last day should come down in ther whitest garments, they [the Scotch] would run away and cry, "The childrea of the Chapell are come again to torment us! let us fly from the abomination of these boyes and hide ourselves in the mountaynes!"' The serious earnest of all this is proved by the circumstance, that even bishops thought proper to remon-

strate, against the introduction of the images into the chapel, on the plea that they gave offence to the people; to which remonstrance James at length gave way; although not without a severe sarcasm at the ignorance which could not distinguish between an object set up for decoration, and one set up for worship.* To show further the alarm with which the people regarded every symptom of returning Episcopacy, an absolute riot took place at the funeral of one of the royal guard, which was performed with the English burial-service, and strong exception was taken by the clergy against the appearance of the clergyman on that occasion in a surplice. The clergyman was William Laud, now chaplain to an English bishop, but afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr Chamberlain mentions a circumstance which will appear still less equivocal—that the Bishop of Galloway, Dean of the Chapel-Royal, refused to receive the communion with the King *kneeling*.† This from a bishop! ‡

At the opening of the parliament, James formed part of the equestrian procession, in which, the Scottish senate, as usual, approached their house of assembly; riding 'in as honourable a fashion,' says an Englishman who was present, ‖ 'as I have ever

* Spottiswoode's History.

† Winwood.

‡ The truth is, the bishops of this reign were scarcely worthy of the name, in comparison to those introduced by Charles and Laud about twenty years after. A little finger of the latter class, according to the droll declaration of a Scotch minister, was as heavy as the *haill bouk* (entire bulk) of one of the former.

‖ The anonymous writer of a letter to Bacon.—Bacon's Works, iii. 523.

seen him do in England;' the Earl of Buckingham attending at his stirrup, 'in his collar, but not in his robes.' In his speech, he made a lengthy declaration of his desires, all of which, however injudicious they were to prove in execution, seemed to tend to the good of the country. His prevailing object was to reduce the 'barbarity'—such was the word he used—of this kingdom, to the 'sweet civility' of England; 'adding further,' says the English writer just quoted, 'that, if the Scotch nation would be as docible to learn the goodness of England, as they are teachable to limp after their ill, he might with facility prevail in his desire; for they had learned of the English to drink healths, wear coaches and gay clothes, to take tobacco, and to speak neither Scotch nor English.' There cannot be the least doubt, that, in endeavouring to establish his supremacy over the Scottish church, and reduce it to a conformity of worship, he was inspired with a sincere wish to better the condition of the people, which he justly conceived to be deteriorated by the desultory exertions of their present ill-paid and scattered clergy. And he must have been equally sincere in the attempt which he made on this occasion, to abolish the hereditary sheriffships, which tended so much to keep the people in a sort of thraldom under the gentry, and to substitute justices of the peace of his own appointment. But it was not by a visit of six weeks, that he was to smooth away the obstinate prejudices of the Scotch, against every thing like political or religious improvement. He was obliged, at the end of the parliament, to leave the objects of his journey unfulfilled, or, what turned

out to be nearly the same thing, under the consideration of a set of commissioners.

Two days after the first sitting of the parliament, (June 19,) he celebrated the fifty-first anniversary of his birth, on the spot where that event took place, within Edinburgh castle. Andrew Ket, a boy of nine years of age, on this occasion welcomed his Majesty to the castle gates, in 'ane Hebrew speech;' after which he was presented with several short Latin poems. The whole entertainment afforded at Edinburgh to him and his train, seems to have given much satisfaction, and to have conveyed to the English in general, a more favourable impression of the country than they previously entertained. 'The country,' says Lord Bacon's correspondent, 'affords more profit and better contentment than I could ever promise myself by reading of it. The King was never more cheereful in both body and mind, never so well pleased; *and so are the English of all conditions.* The entertainment very honourable, very general, and very full; every day feasts and invitations. I know not who paid for it. They strive, by discretion, to give us all fair contentment, that we may know that the country is not so contemptible, but that it is worth the cherishing. The Lord Provost of this town, who in English is the Mayor, did feast the King and all the Lords this week; and another day all the gentlemen. And I confess, it was performed with state, with abundance, and with a general content.' We dare not think of the fare upon which the poor citizens must have retreated after all this prodigality.

The King progressed, on the last day of June, from Edinburgh to Stirling, where he was wel-

comed by Mr Robert Murray, commissary, in a speech which contains a strange mixture of deserved and undeserved compliment. After comparing James to a number of the greatest of the Roman emperors—particularly to Constantine!—this officer very properly says, that, under his Majesty's happy government, the laws, which in his minority were like spiders' webs, taking hold of the smallest and letting the greatest pass, were become 'like nets for lions and boars, which hold fastest the most mighty.' Thus, continues he, 'the most savage parts of this countrie have loosed of their wyld nature and become tame. Where' he asks, 'are now the broils of the Borders? where the deadly feuds and ignoble factions of the nobles? the stryfe of barons and gentlemen? where is the wolfish cruelty of the clans in the Isles and far Highlands? Are not all now, by your Majesties wyse and provident government, under God, either abolished or amended? And so, justlie wee may avouch, *Scotiam invenisti lateritiam, marmoream fecisti.* *' He concludes by stating that, 'justly as Stirling may vaunt of her naturall beautie and impregnable situation, of the labyrinths of her delicious Forth, of the deliciousness of her vallayes, and the herds of deare in her park; though she may esteem herself famous' by the connection of her early history with that of Rome, and the association of her name with that of great men, from Agricola to William the Lyon; 'yet doth she esteeme this her onlie glorie and worthiest praise, that she was the place of your Majesties education,

* You found Scotland brick, you made it marble—what was said of Augustus regarding Rome.

and that those sacred brows, which now bear the weightie diadems of three invincible nations, were empalled with their first here.' Upon the whole, the Stirling speech is superior to most others delivered to James in his progress through the country, both in point of sense and expression. He spent four or five days in his palace at Stirling castle; days in all probability the most delightful he had spent for many years, since they presented to him the scenes of his infancy and youth.

He advanced to Perth on the 5th of July, and was welcomed to that ancient and beautiful town in a speech, which, among many more refined compliments, informed the monarch that 'he had stript the strumpet of Rome stark naked, so that, instead of a two-horned lambe, she appeared to the world, as she was indeed, a ten-horned devil!' Perth was not a town which could be expected to suggest the most agreeable ideas to his Majesty. It was here that he underwent, seventeen years before, the perils of the Gowry treason. It is very probable, however, that that affair was the very cause of his coming out of his way to pay the town this visit. The Gowry conspiracy, however strong the impression of its reality was fixed upon his own mind, had been a great deal discredited in England as well as Scotland; and he might now wish to give the testimony of locality and of eye-witnesses to his own story, as a means of producing entire conviction in his English courtiers. We accordingly find that, before visiting Perth, he had given orders that all the persons who had been present at the tragedy, now surviving, should meet him on a certain day in the town. With these, immediately after his arrival, he enter-

ed Gowry house, followed by his suite, and, with great ceremony, detailed the whole series of the circumstances, illustrating each, as he proceeded, with the confirmatory remarks of the witnesses. Finally, ascending to the chamber in which the two brothers had received their wounds, he knelt down upon the floor, (on which the blood was still visible,) and, causing all his attendants to kneel around him, 'with tears of contrition for his sins to God, and thankfulness for his mercy, using many pious ejaculations, embraced all those actors in the tragedy,' with the exception of the poor slave Henderson, who was only permitted to kiss his hand.* This affair is strongly characteristic of the King, and should be held as adding to the probability of his perfect sincerity in the original transaction. It had the effect of satisfying the minds of many of the English upon the subject.

From Perth, James retrograded to Falkland, and from thence to St Andrews, at which last place, the corporation and the university combined to overwhelm him with Latin congratulations. He spent a few days at that ancient seat of the Muses, chiefly in wranglings with the more intractable of the clergy, but occasionally in the more agreeable business of presiding at university disputations. On the 18th of July, he had returned to Stirling, where, next day, he received a visit from a deputation of the University of Edinburgh, who were to have disputed before him at that city, if public business had not prevented him from giving them a hearing.

* Howell's State Worthies, *(art. 'Earl of Holderness,')* p. 786.

This meeting took place in the chapel-royal at Stirling Castle, and was attended by a great number of the English and Scotch nobility, and by many learned men. No scene could be more germane to the disposition of the monarch, who, accordingly, as we are told, enjoyed it highly. The first question discussed by the learned doctors, was, 'Ought sheriffs and other inferior magistrates to be hereditary?'—a question at this time agitated in the national senate, where it was the earnest wish of King James that it should be decided in the negative. As might have been expected, the oppugners of the question soon got the advantage; for the weighty arguments of royalty were thrown into that scale. The King was highly delighted with their success, and, turning to the Marquess of Hamilton, (hereditary sheriff of Clydesdale,) who stood behind his chair, said, "James, you see your cause is lost, and all that can be said for it is clearly answered and refuted."

'The second thesis was On the Nature of Local Motion. The opposition to this was very great, and the respondent produced numerous arguments from Aristotle in support of his thesis; which occasioned the King to say, "These men know the mind of Aristotle as well as he did himself when alive."

'The third thesis was Concerning the Origin of Fountains or Springs. The King was so well pleased with this controversy, that, although the three quarters of an hour allotted for the disputation were expired, he caused them to proceed, sometimes speaking for and against both respondent and opponent, seldom letting an argument on either side pass without proper remarks.

'The disputations being over, the King withdrew to supper; after which, he sent for the disputants, whose names were John Adamson, James Fairlie, Patrick Sands, Andrew Young, James Reid, and William King; before whom he learnedly discoursed on the several subjects controverted by them, and began to comment on their several names, and said, "These gentlemen, by their names, were destined for the acts they had in hand this day;" and proceeded as followeth:

"Adam was father of all, and Adam's son had the first part of this act. The defender is justly called Fairlie;* his thesis had some fairlies in it, and he sustained them very fairly, and with many fair lies given to the oppugners. And why should not Mr Sands be the first to enter the sands? But now I clearly see that all sands are not barren, for, certainly, he hath shown a fertile wit. Mr Young is very old in Aristotle. Mr Reid need not be red with blushing for his acting this day. Mr King disputed very kingly, and of a kingly purpose, concerning the royal supremacy of reason above anger and all passions. I am so well satisfied,"' added his Majesty, '"with this day's exercise, that I will be godfather to the College of Edinburgh, and have it called *the College of King James*, for, after its founding, it stopped sundry years in my minority; after I came to knowledge, I held to it, and caused it to be established; and although I see many look upon it with an evil eye, yet I will have them know that, having given it my name, I have espoused its quarrel, and at a proper time will give it a royal god-

* *Ferly* is the Scotch for *wonder*.

bairn gift, to enlarge its revenues." The King being told that there was one in company his Majesty had taken no notice of, namely, Henry Charteris, Principal of the College, who, though a man of great learning, yet by his innate bashfulness, was rendered unfit to speak in such an august assembly, his Majesty answered, "His name agrees well with his nature, for charters contain much matter, yet say nothing; and, though they say nothing, yet they put great things into men's mouths." The King having signified that he would be pleased to see his remarks on the Professors' names versified, it was accordingly done; as follows:—

As Adam was the first man, whence all beginning tak,
So Adamson was president, and first man in this act.
The Thesis Fairlie did defend, which though they lies contein,
Yet were fair lies, and he the same right fairlie did maintein.
The field first entered Mr Sands, and there he made me see,
That not all sands are barren sands, but that some fertile be.
Then Mr Young most subtilie the Theses did impogue,
And kythed old in Aristotle, althogh his name be Young.
To him succeeded Mr Reid, who, thogh Reid be his name,
Needs neithir for his disput blush, nor of his speech think shame.
Last entred Mr King the lists, and dispute like a king,
How reason, reigning like a king, should anger under bring.

To their deserved praise have I thus playd upon their names,
And will their Colledge hence be called *The Colledge of King James.*' *

It being the King's intention to return to England by the west road, he left Stirling for Glasgow, where he arrived on the 22nd of July. At his entrance into this city, since rendered so eminent by commerce, but which at the period in question was described as '*nec opium copiâ, nec ædium splendore, nec mœnium ambitu, nec civium dignitate, conspicua,*' he was welcomed, in a complimentary speech, 'by Mr William Hay of Barro, commissar of Glasgo,' who described himself as being, on such an impressive occasion, like 'one touched by a torpedo, or seen of a wolf,' though he nevertheless found speech to describe the royal visiter, as being, 'among the Princes of his tyme, like gold amongst the metals, the diamond amongst the gemmes, the rose amongst the flowers, and the moone amongst the stars.' Here James was also complimented with a long Latin speech, which Robert Boyd of Trochrig, principal of the College of Glasgow, delivered to him in the name of that institution. He spent two days in the archiepiscopal city, a brief period, but correspondent perhaps to its importance in the year 1617. It is probable that he did not feel much interested in Glasgow; for, during the whole of his Scottish reign, though generally living within thirty or forty miles of the city, he is only found to have once visited it—on his retirement from Edinburgh, after the murder of the Earl of Moray, in 1593.

* Muses' Welcome.

He advanced, July 24, to Paisley, 'where, in the Earl of Abercorne his great hall, was gratiouslie delivered, by a prettie boy of nine yeeres of age, (Williame Semple, son of Sir James Semple of Beltries), a speech in the vernacular tongue,' the most fantastic, perhaps, of all the fantastic orations which had yet been uttered in his presence. Having reminded the King, that when the people of Rome were saluting Cæsar, 'a sillie pye among the rest, cried "Ave, Cæsar!" too,' this youth proceeds to say, that he, an equally humble creature in comparison, presumes, in the name of his fellow-subjects 'in these parts,' to lift up his 'sillie voice' in congratulation of his sacred Majesty. He swears by the Black Book of Paisley that his Majesty is welcome.

> 'Thus have I said, Sir, and thus have I sworn;
> Performance tak from noble Abercorne.'

Flying to Ovid for metaphor, he compares the King to Phœbus, and makes out Scotland to be his Clytia, because it was his first love. He has already passed the head, neck, and arms of his Clytia; but it is only now that he has at last reached her heart. 'Why? because in this very parish is that auncient seat of Sir William Wallas,* that worthie warrier, to whome, under God, we owe that you ar ours, and Britaine yours. In this very parish is that noble house of Dairnley Lennox, whence sprung your Majestie's most famous progenitors; in the city you came from,† the bed that

* William Wallace. the Scottish patriot, was the younger son of Wallace of Elderslie, near Paisley.

† Glasgow.

bred you; in the next you goe to,* that noble race of Hamilton, wherein your Highness's royal stem distilled some droppes of their dearest blood; and in this very house is your Majestie's own noble Abercorne, a chief sprigg of the same roote, removed only a little by time, but nothing by nature;' And much more stuff to the same purpose.

On the 28th of July, the King was at Hamilton, the seat of James, second Marquess of Hamilton; on the 31st, he was at Sanquhar Castle, the seat of William Lord Crichton, cousin and successor to the felon lord; on the 1st of August, he was entertained at Drumlangrig, the seat of Sir William Douglas, ancestor of the Queensberry family; and on the 4th of August, he reached the town of Dumfries, where he was welcomed with a flaming speech by Mr James Halliday, the commissary. There is a tradition at Dumfries, that, at an entertainment given to him by the citizens, some black fishes of an unusual kind were set before his Majesty. There being something strange in the smell as well as in the colour of this dish, the sagacious nose which smelt out the gunpowder treason, took alarm, and its royal proprietor, suspecting a design to poison him, started up, exclaiming "*Treason!*" Nor could he be prevailed upon to re-seat himself at table, without a great deal of difficulty. The fishes were probably from the neighbouring lake called Lochmaben, which to this day produces a species known no where else in Scotland. ‡

* The King was to advance next to Hamilton.

‡ Called *Vendices*.

After a farewell sermon, preached to him by the Bishop of Galloway, which, according to the report of Spottiswood, caused the congregation to burst out into tears, the King passed over the border of his native kingdom, and lodged, on the night of the 5th, at Carlisle. It is a curious anecdote of the national spirit of Scotland, and of the uncompromising system of retribution maintained by its half-civilized inhabitants, that a gentleman of the name of Ker, a kinsman or clansman of the degraded Somerset, was here apprehended for a design of assassinating the new favourite Buckingham, whom he had supposed to be the main instrument of his friend's downfall. The King proceeded, on the 6th, to Brougham Castle, the seat of the Earl of Cumberland; on the 7th to Appleby; on the 8th to Wharton-Hall, the mansion of Lord Wharton; on the 9th to Kendal; on the 11th to Hornby Castle, the seat of Sir Conyers Darcy; and on the 12th to Ashton-Hall, a house of Lord Gerard.

While progressing in this easy fashion through Lancashire, James received a petition from a great number of the peasants, tradesmen, and servants, requesting that they might be allowed to take their diversion, 'as of old accustomed,' after divine service on Sundays; a circumstance trifling in itself, but which is supposed to have been followed by effects of great importance in the history of England. It must be understood, that, for some years previous to the death of Elizabeth, and even since James's accession, the Puritans had been introducing a fashion of observing Sunday with the Judaical degree of strictness; forbidding the people, on that day, to enjoy any of the recreations

which formerly distinguished it, devoting it entirely to religious purposes, and, with an affectation which partly remains at this day, terming it *the Sabbath*, as if it had been the real day of rest of the old dispensation. As a matter of course, the Puritans were opposed in their views by the more liberal religionists of the established church, who, with more rationality, esteeming it a day set apart for purposes partly of piety and partly of rest and recreation, used it accordingly. That King James was of the latter way of thinking, is proved by an anecdote which is related of him. He had ordered his coaches to be brought through the city of London, one Sunday, that they might be ready to attend him on a progress which he intended to commence next morning. The Lord Mayor, offended at the indecent noise which they made, ordered them to be stopped by his officers; which intelligence being carried to the King, he swore that he thought there had been no more kings in England than himself, and, in a fit of passion, sent a peremptory order to the Mayor to release the carriages. The magistrate obeyed the royal commands; only remarking, that he thought to do his duty so long as he could, but, a higher power coming in his place, he found himself necessitated to yield; a declaration so respectful, and at the same time so judicious, that James could not help applauding him for it. But, indeed, when we reflect on the joyous temperament of King James, and his antipathy to every thing that smacked of preciseness or puritanism, we can be at no loss to predicate the side which he was to take in this controversy.

At the present time, perhaps, after having wit-

nessed the horrors of the Scotch Sunday, he was just in that mood of mind, that a circumstance like the petition of the Lancashire peasantry was sufficient to decide him in favour of active proceedings. He now resolved to publish a Book of Sports, as it was called; namely, a description of certain games, such as dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsun-ales, Morris-dances, and the setting up of May-poles, which he thought the people might innocently recreate themselves with, after divine service; containing also an injunction, to be uttered by the ministers from their pulpits, that the people should forthwith proceed to enjoy these recreative amusements, after they should have attended public worship. There can be no doubt that this was an injudicious measure; because, by leading the people to the very border of propriety, it tempted them to transgress the line. It would have been enough if such sports had been tacitly permitted—for, in that case, a consciousness that they were discountenanced by the law, would have caused the people to mix the proper degree of trembling with their mirth. Yet, after all, the adoption of such a measure by the King, was prompted merely by the spirit of the age, which dictated violent remedies for violent diseases; and there was nothing more extraordinary in the promulgation of a book of sports, than there was in the absurdity of constraining the mind on Sunday to an unceasing series of devotional exercises, which were abstractly disagreeable to it, and for which there is no injunction in the Scriptures. On this subject, as on most others of a speculative nature in this age, public opinion went to extremes; one party exclaiming in favour of the

gloomy mode of keeping the Sunday, and the other defending the expediency of making it partly a day of festive enjoyment; and all that can properly be said of the affair of the Book of Sports, which has excited so much rancorous feeling among the more serious part of the community against King James, is, that it was the principal symptom or declaration of opinion exhibited by the latter body of Christians. It is said, however, that this measure, though adopted expressly in compliance with the desires of a portion of the people, and intended for the happiness of the whole, gave general and deep offence, and had great effect in bringing on the crisis of the civil war. During that unhappy contention, when it several times happened that the King lost battles which took place on Sunday, the victors never failed to refer to the Book of Sports, enforced by his father, as the cause of his misfortunes; observing, that the day which the House of Stuart had first caused to be profaned by sports, to the offence of their people, was now profaned by fighting to their own disadvantage. *

* The following are M. D'Israeli's remarks on this subject:—

'The King found the people of Lancashire discontented, from the unusual deprivation of their popular recreations on Sundays and holidays, after the church-service: "With our own ears we heard the general complaint of our people." The Catholic priests were busily insinuating among the lower orders, that the Reformed Religion was a sullen deprivation of all mirth and social amusements, and thus "turning the people's hearts." But while they were denied what the King terms "lawful recreations," they had substituted some vicious ones. Alehouses were more frequented, drunkenness more general, tale-mongery and sedition, the vices of sedentary idleness,

In prosecuting his journey to London, James contrived to enjoy a great deal of his favourite amusement, by directing his course through the royal forests of Sherwood and Needwood, whither he had previously caused his hounds to be dispatched to meet him.

"James, our Royall King, would ride a hunting
To the greene forest so pleasant and faire;
To see the hart skipping and dainty does tripping;
Unto merry Sherwood his nobles repaire:
Hawke and hound were unbound and all things prepared,
For the game, in the same, with good regard.
All a long summer day rode the King pleasantly,
With all his Princes and Nobles eache one,
Chasing the hart and hinde, and the bucke gallantlye,
Till the dark evening forced them all to turn home."*

He returned to London on Holyrood day (the 13th of September), having been exactly six months absent.

It now remains to be seen what success he was destined to have in the project of reducing the Scotch church to conformity with that of England—the grand object of his journey.

The present writer presumes it to be an evident fact, that, since the Reformation, the tendency of popular feeling in both countries has re-

prevailed; while a fanatical gloom was spreading over the country. The King, whose gaiety of temper instantly sympathised with the multitude, and perhaps alarmed at this new shape which Puritanism was assuming, published "the Book of Sports," which soon obtained the contemptuous term of "*the Dancing Book.*"

* *Ballad of the King and Miller of Mansfield.*

ther been favourable to a further excision of ceremonies and external symbols from religion, than to a return to any which were cut off at that era, and that the reformed Church of England, with its numerous abuses, or at least inutilities, has rather been indebted for its continued existence, to the inextricable admixture of its parts with the framework of the state, than to any favour which it enjoys among the people as a means by which they may procure religious instruction. These points being granted, he scarcely requires to point out how difficult a task it must have been for King James, to impose upon the expressly popular Church of Scotland, any of the characteristics of an establishment which has always been, confessedly, little more than an engine of state.

The form in which he laid his wishes before the Scottish Parliament, was a proposal for an act, empowering him, with his bishops, to frame the laws and customs of the church. Eventually, on discovering that a number of the clergy intended to protest against such a statute, he thought proper to forbear presenting it, and was induced, for the sake of soothing all existing prejudices, to submit his desires in the first place to the consideration of a General Assembly. Having by this means got him to leave the country, the clergy assembled at St Andrews in November; when, being recovered a little from the overpowering influence of his personal presence, they could only be prevailed upon by commissioners to sanction two of the points of conformity that he desired of them—to administer the sacrament in private to sick persons, and, in its ordinary dispensation, to give the elements from the hands of the ministers

at a table. This admission, so far short of what he expected, drew from him an angry letter, wherein he informed them, that he 'was come to that age when he would not be content to be fed with broth, as one of their coat was wont to speak,' and that, since they had so far contemned the moderate measures he had taken with them, they should now find what it was to draw down the anger of a king. He proceeded to put his threat in execution, by suspending the additional stipends which he had granted them, and by imprisoning one or two whose violent opposition had brought them under the censure of his court of high commission. The effect of this severity was such, that, in a second General Assembly, held at Perth in August 1618, they sanctioned five innovatory articles which he presented to them—for keeping up five holidays in the year, kneeling at the sacrament, confirmation of children, and the administration of the two sacraments in private houses. With this, and with the virtual ascendency which he had obtained over the clergy, he was for the time content. But it is said that, in hardly any parish in the kingdom, were the Perth articles really observed. A thousand expedients were devised for evading them. Men in office absented themselves from church on communion-days, on pretence of sickness; no children came forward to be confirmed; people never called the clergy to their houses to administer either sacrament; and not a shop was ever shut on the holidays, Christmas and Easter not excepted. When an individual of the present age considers the innocent and perhaps laudable nature of these innovations, and observes with what loathing they were regarded by the people of Scotland, he is apt to

be reminded of the exclamations of the French cook in the novel, forced to prepare a feast after the manner of the ancients; who, as we are told, was heard exclaiming, from the profundities of his kitchen, while his master stood over him with a drawn sword, "Spare me—spare me the garlic and oil!"

This is the last circumstance of note that took place in regard to Scotland during the reign of King James. With the exception of the detestation in which his attempts upon the church were beheld, it may be said, that his reign over that country between 1603 and the period of his death was a popular one, as it unquestionably was happy for his people. If his successor could have prosecuted the design of equalizing the Anglican and Scotican churches with the same moderation and gentleness of spirit, we should never have heard of the Covenant or its wars, and might have seen the civilization of the people began nearly a century earlier than the time when it afterwards did actually commence.

CHAPTER X.

EXPEDITION OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.—DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE—CASE OF LADY LAKE.

1617—1620.

For nearly a twelvemonth after the King's visit to Scotland, his life was spent in its usual tranquillity and notelessness, or was only enlivened by the negotiations which he thought proper to carry on for the marriage of his son Charles to one of the daughters of the King of Spain. In the summer, however, of 1618, he was vexed by a cruel necessity which occurred, of inflicting legal vengeance on Sir Walter Raleigh.

This knight had been condemned, it will be recollected, in the very year of the King's accession, for his concern in the mysterious plot of the Lords Cobham and Grey. Since then, instead of suffering the death to which he was sentenced, he had been kept in close confinement in the Tower, for the greater part of the time, in enjoyment of his estates. James has been much censured for his cruelty to this gifted individual; and a saying of Prince Henry is often quoted, that none but his father would have kept such a bird in a cage. But as nothing is known of the secret state reasons

which the King must have had for his severity, censure ought to be hesitatingly applied. In 1616, by a concurrence of favourable circumstances, among which the purchased interference of some of Buckingham's relations was not the least, Sir Walter was able to persuade the King to liberate him from the Tower, and at the same time to give him a royal commission to conduct an expedition to a certain part of Guiana, in South America, where he was confident of being able to work a gold mine, with which he was acquainted, to great advantage. Though this commission conferred upon him a power of life and death over his sailors, it did not comprehend a pardon of his own offences, the King thinking it prudent to retain the sentence as a kind of check upon him, the more necessary as he suspected him of entertaining designs of a less innocent nature than those of working a mine. How James yielded to give any trust to a man under such circumstances, and of whom he entertained suspicions, is only to be accounted for by a reference to his easy nature, which could seldom effectually resist continued solicitations, and partly perhaps by the compact which Raleigh made with him, to give up to the royal treasury a fifth part of all the gold that might be found. If James was imposed upon in aught by the plausible representations of his prisoner, he had many companions in deception; for Raleigh gathered into his company some scores of the younger sons of the best gentry, who embarked their whole fortunes in his project. But the truth is, the King never entertained any high expectations of what Sir Walter should do. He seems all along to have penetrated into the fanciful and unprincipled character of

this man, which has passed with posterity for something so much the reverse of what it really was. It is said, that, on being released—which event happened about the time that Somerset was imprisoned—he remarked, that 'the whole history of the world * had not the like precedent, of a king's prisoner to purchase freedom, and his bosom favourite to have the halter, but in Scripture, in the case of Mordecai and Haman:' which being reported to the King, his Majesty drily replied, that 'Raleigh might die in that deceit;' a saying which he caused to become prophetic. It is just, indeed, likely, that a character like Raleigh's, which was simply that of a clever and unscrupulous adventurer, would be at once the most odious possible to the open, honest, unpretending nature of the King, and the most pervious to his extraordinary power of unriddling hidden characters. In a declaration which James afterwards published, to explain his conduct in the case of Raleigh, he mentions, that he did not think it proper to forbid an expedition which was undertaken at the expense, and for the profit of his subjects, especially at a time when the peaceful and prosperous condition of the country afforded so good an opportunity of establishing distant colonies, and prosecuting remote branches of trade.

There seems little reason to doubt that Raleigh, from the first, rather contemplated the design of acting as a privateer in the Spanish settlements, than of peacefully digging the mine which he had described to King James. Facts, at least, run

* He had just been engaged in the composition of a work under that title.

strongly against him. He never had seen the mine in question: he was only informed of it by a sailor of the name of Keymis, whose sole proof of its existence was a lump of ore which he exhibited! He also knew that the Spaniards had settled and planted a town, at the place described, so as to destroy, of course, the obsolete and visionary claim which he set forth to the coast, on the plea of having landed upon it twenty-three years before. In the fitting out of his expedition, he decidedly manifested hostile intentions; for he carried with him thirteen armed vessels. He had always talked of receiving a number of miners when he should rendezvous at Plymouth; but he eventually sailed without taking one on board: the whole company was of a military description. He was also heard, before he quitted London, to drop hints of a certain town in those parts, 'upon which he could make a saving voyage in tobacco, if there were no other spoil.'

So strong were appearances against him, that the Spanish resident, Count de Gondemar, found it necessary to remonstrate, in the most earnest terms, against his being permitted to sail; and James was obliged, before he went away, to exact a solemn engagement from him, that he should not offer the least molestation to any of the settlements of that nation. The King has been a thousand times ridiculed for showing so much deference to Spain, while Raleigh has been applauded for his intentions, supposing he entertained them, of attacking its settlements. But, even allowing that the King displayed weakness in his matrimonial negotiations with Spain, could he be considered as doing a wrong or a weak thing, if he took mea-

sures for preventing one of his subjects from opening a private war with a nation with which he was at peace? It may be very delightful to national prejudice, to reflect on the gallantry, as it may be called, of an individual Briton, who warred single-handed against a foreign power, which, in the dreadfully misused language of a past time, was the *natural enemy* of England. But, only suppose the case reversed; conceive a brave Hidalgo fitting out an expedition, in a time of peace, to attack Virginia or Delaware, could we have blamed the King of Spain, whether or not he had been wishing to marry his son to a princess of England, for interfering to prevent what would, in that case, have appeared to us so gross a violation of the law of nations?

James has been cruelly misrepresented, in almost every stage of this unhappy affair. He is charged with meanness of spirit in apprising Gondemar of the strength and resources of Sir Walter Raleigh; information which enabled the Spanish court to strengthen the points where it had reason to dread his attack. But this was only a fair and manly way of testifying to Spain, that no hostile intentions were entertained. It has strangely escaped the observation of the apologists of Raleigh, that, if his designs had really been innocent, such a betrayal, as it has been termed, could do him no harm. It only could operate to his disadvantage, in the event of his proceeding to those hostile measures, which he had engaged not to resort to.

The expedition sailed at the end of March 1617, while the King was on his journey to Scotland; and, after an unpleasant and somewhat disastrous voyage, it reached the mouth of the Orooneko, up-

on the banks of which river the mine was said to be. Raleigh, being either sick or pretending to be so, * sent five vessels up the river, under the command of Keymis, each vessel being manned with fifty men. As this detachment passed along, it was assailed with shot fired by the Spaniards from the shore; the settlers being naturally alarmed at this invasion, which was the more unjustifiable as there was enough of room along the coast of the new world for colonists of all countries, without thus jostling each other. On arriving at the place where the mine was described to be, a Spanish town called St Thomas was found to occupy the shore; and it seemed that there was no chance of attaining their ends without first fighting with the inhabitants, who were ranged on the banks to receive them. Whether such an encounter had been contemplated from the beginning, cannot be ascertained; but it is certain that little deliberation or ceremony was used in putting it into execution. Keymis, assisted by Walter Raleigh, son of the commander, led the troops ashore, and commenced a spirited attack upon the Spaniards; the latter crying, it is said, that 'this (meaning the town) was the real mine they had come to explore, and none but fools ever expected any other.' The English beat back the colonists with great slaughter, plundered their town, set fire to it, and soon laid waste a scene, which had but a little before exhibited every symptom of prosperity and happiness. The son of Raleigh fell in the onset. Keymis soon after made an attempt to reach the

* His pretence of being sick on his journey to London, proves that he was capable of also pretending in this case.

mine; but, being beaten in a chance skirmish with a party of the settlers, he lost heart before attaining the desired spot, and, retreating on board his ships, returned to Raleigh, to inform him of the death of his eldest son, and the failure of the whole enterprise.

So general was now the impression of Raleigh's turpitude among his associates, that he no longer could exert any command over them, far less persuade them to renew the attempt upon the Spanish settlements. He would have gladly carried them to France, to Newfoundland, or to any other place than Great Britain; but they compelled him to return to that country—though perhaps without entertaining the wish of bringing him to condign punishment. He arrived at Plymouth, with a ruined fleet, and a much reduced company, in July 1618; before which time, in consequence of the representations of the Spanish government, the King had issued a proclamation, condemning his proceedings in the most unqualified language. No sooner was it known at London that he had arrived, than Sir Lewis Stukely, Vice-admiral of the county of Devon, a kinsman of his own, was sent down to take him into custody. Being seized at Ashburnham, on his way to London, he was speedily conveyed towards that city, but not without making several attempts by the way to escape, some of them under such mean circumstances of artifice as could scarcely be believed by those who hold up this man as a pattern of English bravery. Sir Lewis Stukely, with a meanness far less justifiable, permitted him on one occasion to escape so far, for the purpose of proving to the public that he was not confident of his own innocence.

He was once more committed to the Tower, from which, two years before, he had been liberated under such extraordinary circumstances; and it was soon evident that he could entertain no hope of escaping death. 'For these his great and heinous offences,' says the King in his declaration, 'in acts of hostility upon his Majesty's confederates; depredations, and abuses, as well of his commission, as of his Majesty's subjects under his charge; impostures, attempts of escape, declining his Majesty's justice, and the rest, evidently proved, or confessed by himself, he had made himself utterly unworthy of his Majesty's further mercy; and because he could not by law be judicially called in question, for that his former attainder of treason is the highest and last work of the law, (whereby he was *civiliter mortuus*), his Majesty was inforced (unless attainders should become privileges for all subsequent offences) to resolve to have him executed upon his former attainder.'

Raleigh accordingly suffered death in Westminster Palace Yard, October 29, which day was selected, it is said, because the Lord Mayor's show, occurring at the time of the execution, was expected to draw away the people from witnessing an instance of public justice in which they could not be expected to sympathize. Raleigh, from the many brilliant points in his character, and from his being supposed to suffer chiefly at the instigation of a detested foreign power, has been held up as next thing to a martyr; but, till it can be proved that he entertained no piratical intentions against the Spanish settlers, or that the people of that nation are not men, and entitled to the rights of men as well as the English, it must remain a fixed

point with the writer of these pages, that the King did no more than justice in putting him to death. The probability is, however, that, but for the sympathy which literary men in general bear towards a suffering individual of their own order—but for the respect which all men entertain for talent, in whatever character enshrined—we should have never seen it questioned that Raleigh only suffered what was due to his crimes. *

The King's life, for two or three years after this affair, is distinguished only by private or domestic incidents, or by the symptoms of age and dotage which were now fast advancing upon him. That dotage was exemplified by nothing so remarkable, as by the inordinate affection he entertained for Buckingham, who was about this time created Marquess.

Buckingham, as already related, was a young man of singularly prepossessing exterior, inco-

* 'One Mr Wiemark, a wealthy man, great novilant [*Puritan*], and constant Paul's Walker, hearing the news that day of the beheading of Sir Walter Raleigh, "His head," said he, "would do very well on the shoulders of Sir Robert Naunton, Secretary of State." ' [Sir Robert was a good man, but, according to a saying here very appropriate, no great *headpiece*.] 'These words were complained of, and Wiemark summoned to the Privy Council, where he pleaded for himself, that he intended no disrespect to Mr Secretary, whose known worth was above all detraction; only, he spake in reference to the old proverb, *Two heads are better than one*: And for that present he was dismissed. Not long after, when rich men were called upon for a contribution to St Paul's, Weimark at the Council-table subscribed a hundred pounds; but Mr Secretary told him two hundred were better than one, which between fear and charity, Wiemark was fain to subscribe.'—*Fuller's Worthies.*

much, it is said, as to be almost all that a devout imagination could have conceived of an angel. The King, it will be recollected, had been struck by his delicate regular features, which he esteemed the surest index of an ingenuous and amiable character; and had been induced by that notion, which he partly found justified by acquaintance, to elevate him from his obscure condition to the nearest seat beside the throne. Sir Simon D'Ewes, who is generally esteemed a sensible writer, justifies the monarch so far in this strange proceeding, by saying that the countenance of Buckingham was such as to impress a strong conviction of the affability and gentleness of his nature.* He was also justified, for some years, by the excellent conduct of the youth. Buckingham was originally possessed of the sweetest dispositions, and acted to all persons with the greatest generosity: it was only when burdened with more weighty affairs than he had abilities to manage, and when the tongues of flattering courtiers had, as it were, licked away the feet from his understanding, that he began to deserve the historical maledictions he has since received.

The anecdotes related by news-mongers of the period, to show how completely James reposed upon his favourite, would seem to indicate a great extent of weakness. At a dinner which Buckingham gave him, in July 1618, he drank particularly to every one of the host's numerous relations, and afterwards sent to each individual some message of affection. When dinner was done, he rose

* Sir Simon informs us, that the *hands* of Buckingham were especially curious and beautiful.

up, and, approaching the table where all the guests besides himself were seated, drank a common health to them all over; saying, that he desired to advance the family of Villiers above all others, *that he lived but for that end*, and that he hoped his posterity would perfect it so far as he should leave it unfinished. At another feast, given by Lady Hatton, 'the principal graces and favours lighted on Lady Compton (mother of Buckingham *) and her children, whom the King praised and kissed, and blessed all those that wished them well.' † The person who records this circumstance, informs us that, in December 1617, he was afflicted with a fit of moroseness, on account of deranged health; 'yet was never so much out of tune, but the very sight of my Lord of Buckingham would settle and quiet all.' He also tells us, that his Majesty once nearly killed a Lord Mayor by the vehemence and indefatigability with which he persecuted the poor man to get his daughter as a match to one of the favourite's brothers. Sir Sebastian Harvey, says he, 'was prevented from attending, ‡ being very sick and surfeited upon messages sent him by the King about his only daughter, whom the Countess of Buckingham will needs have for her son Christopher. The Mayor, a wilful dogged man, will not yield by any means, fair or foul, as yet, and wishes himself and his daughter both dead, rather than be compelled. The truth is, she is not past fourteen, and very little of growth, so that he pro-

* Afterwards made Countess of Buckingham in her own right. She is here called Lady Compton, from her second husband, Sir Thomas Compton.

† Winwood's Memorials.

‡ A civic ceremony.

tests he will not marry her these four or five years by his will. But yet he hath taken the King's messages so to heart, that he hath been at death's door, and is not yet recovered; though the Duke of Lennox and Marquis of Buckingham have been severally with him, besides divers others from the King, to comfort him.' James afterwards paid the worthy Mayor a personal visit on the same account, but without success.

It is one of the most surprising things about this system of favouritism, that we find Buckingham, to appearance, almost as acceptable to the Queen, the Prince, and the most eminent personages about the Court, as to King James. There are many letters extant, between Anne and Buckingham, written in a tone of kind regard on the one hand, and devout respect on the other; the queen generally addressing the favourite by the epithet, 'Dear dog.' From many circumstances, but especially that of Buckingham's continuance in favour after James's death, it is also evident that a real friendship subsisted betwixt him and Prince Charles; the latter of whom, in 1618, was glad to employ the former, in interceding for a restoration to his Majesty's good graces, after having lost them for a small offence.* We also find the intellectual Bacon, and the most ancient and haughty of the nobility, gladly prostrating themselves before this handsome, but ordinary-minded upstart.

There were some exceptions to the general conduct, chiefly in persons who had happened to

* The offence of having taken measures to prevail upon the Queen to make him her chief legatee.

quarrel with the minion. Such individuals, knowing they could never reach the King's ear, or partake of his patronage, so long as Buckingham was triumphant, took a lesson from the circumstances of his rise, and endeavoured to oust him, by engaging the King's affections upon some other object. It will perhaps be scarcely believed, that many honourable persons employed themselves, for this end, in trimming up and pushing forward lads with smooth faces and handsome persons, whom they took under their charge, and who, they thought, might perhaps be successful in catching the royal eye. Among others were Sir Henry Mildmay, (afterwards one of the judges of King Charles,) William Brooke, son of the George Brooke executed at Winchester in 1603, and one Monson, son of Sir William Monson. 'This mustering of minions, and pressing so fast forward,' says Mr Chamberlain, in a letter dated February 21, 1618, 'makes the world suspect it is toward a turning water.' No conjecture, however, could be more erroneous. James, blind as he was to Buckingham, was perspicacious enough in regard to his rivals. On the 28th, Mr Chamberlain writes, 'Most of our young court gentlemen are vanished like mushroons; for the day before the King's going to Theobald's, the Lord Chamberlain, by express order, told young Monson, that the King did not like his forwardness, and presenting himself continually about him. His education had been in such places, and with such persons, * as was not to be allowed of. Therefore his Majesty willed him henceforth to forbear

* Probably Puritans are meant.

his presence; and, if he would follow his (the Lord Chamberlain's advice), he would forbear the court also. This was a shrewd reprimand and cross blow to some who, they say, made account to raise and recover their fortunes by setting up this idol, and took great pains in pricking and prankingh him up, *besides washing his face every day with posset-curd!*' *

* In the Advocates' Library are many original letters written by Buckingham and King James to each other, some of which have been printed by Lord Hailes, while others, by coarseness of language, are quite unfitted for publication. Buckingham always addresses the King by the epithet, 'Dear dad and gossip,' and generally subscribes himself, 'Your majesties most humble slave and dog, Stinie.' According to Dr Welwood, who (in a note, Compleat History of England, ii. 697.) alludes to these or other letters, James generally addresses Buckingham as his dear child and gossip, and subscribes himself his dear dad and gossip, or dear dad and steward. Here is a specimen of James's part of the correspondence.

'MY ONLY SWEET AND DEAR CHILD,

'Blessing, blessing, blessing, on thy heart's roots and all thine, this Thursday morning. Here is great store of game, as they say, partridges and stoncouleurs: I know who shall get their part of them; and here is the finest company of young hounds that ever was seen. God bless the sweet master of my harriers, that made them be so well kept all this summer; I mean Tom Badger. I assure myself, thou wilt punctually observe the dyet and journey I set thee down in my first letter from Theobald's. God bless thee and my sweet Kate and Mall, to the comfort of thy

'Dear dad,

'JAMES, R.'

'P. S.—Let my last compliment settle to thy heart, till we have a sweet and comfortable meeting, which God send, and give thee grace to bid the drogues adieu this day.'

The following passage from one of Buckingham's epis-

The people of England were alarmed to a great degree in the fall of the year 1618, by a comet, which appeared in the constellation Libra, and was so large as to extend over forty-five degrees of the heavens. At that period, the appearance of such strangers in the sky was universally believed to prognosticate evil to the inhabitants of the earth; and the present was of such an alarming appearance, as to excite peculiar apprehensions. James alone, it would appear, out of all his people, had the strength of mind to discountenance such notions. Sir Philip Mainwaring in a letter, states, as a wonder, that 'he takes no more notice of the *blazing starre* than he has alwayes done of the day-starre, nor will allow it be any other.' This is so much exculpatory evidence against those who accuse his Majesty of unwonted superstitiousness. *

tles, may be quoted as a corresponding specimen of *his* style, more especially as it includes a characteristic trait of the King.

'* ——— I here you have gott a good stomacke since your being there; but I fere your liberalitie doth not give you leave to eate a good bitt, being well acquainted with that ould custom of yours of *ever giving away the best.* We both (i. e. he and his wife) have fed of nothing els; and though they have all proved fat and tender, yet not being eten at your soncie luckie table, they wanted that sauce which makes all savourie.'

It is curious to observe here the Scotch phrases which the favourite, probably out of compliment, had taken up from the King. It should be mentioned, that James's superscription as Buckingham's 'dear steward,' was a pun on his own name. The King was perpetually sending presents of game, &c. to his favourite; hence he called himself his steward. Hence, also, Buckingham calls the King his 'kind purveyor.'

* It is so much more, that, for many years towards the end of his life, he had renounced the belief in witchcraft;

The comet of 1618 figures in a small poetical effort of Prince Charles, which, in consideration of the author, we shall here introduce. In the course of a progress in February 1619, the court spent some days at a house where there happened to reside for the time, Miss Anne Gawdy, a young lady of extraordinary beauty, daughter to Sir Bassingbourne Gawdy, of Harling in Norfolk, by a niece of the illustrious Bacon. This interesting person excited the admiration of all who attended the King; but no one entertained so enthusiastic a regard for her as Charles, at this period in his nineteenth year, and whose heart is supposed to have hitherto been unoccupied by any such passion. He expressed his estimation of Miss Gawdy by the following quatrain, containing an anagram upon her name, and involving, if no fine poetry, at least a very pretty compliment:

'Heaven's wonder late, but now Earth's glorious ray,
With wonder shines; that's gone, this, *new and gay*,
Still gazed on: in this is more than heaven's light;
Day obscured that; this makes the day more bright.'

The catastrophe which the people believed to be most immediately foretold by the comet, was the demise of Queen Anne, which event took place on the ensuing 2d of March. Her Majesty had been afflicted for more than a year with an inclination to dropsy. The progress of her illness was observed by the public with great concern. 'She is generally well-wished,' says a notator of pass-

an effort of intellect in which he was alone among his people, and that almost for a century. His acuteness in detecting impostures had probably enabled him to see through this miserable superstition.—*Fuller.*

ing events,* [October 22, 1617], and the care of her welfare makes the world more fearful.' 'Once there is hope,' says the same writer, [October 14, 1618,] 'she cannot do amiss that has so many good wishes.' Notwithstanding all their good wishes, her disorder ended fatally, on the day mentioned, at Hampton-Court Palace. Her Majesty would not believe that she was in serious danger till within a very few hours of her death; so that there was only time for a verbal will. By that document, she left the bulk of her fortune, supposed to amount in value to nearly 800,000*l.*, to her son. The King was confined at the time with severe illness at Newmarket: 'He took her death seemly,' says Sir Edward Howard in a letter; but it is known that the melancholy event greatly aggravated his distemper. Her Majesty, who died in the forty-fifth year of her age, received a funeral which was designed to equal that of Queen Elizabeth in magnificence and expense.

Anne was one of those persons of whom it is almost impossible for an historian to say any thing, on account of the perfect notelessness of their character—one of those persons who, being only allied to history by marriage, or by accident, give little beside their names to adorn the historic page. The only good quality of her person was that of a fine skin: almost the only good quality of her mind was a pleasant disposition. The rest may be given in the words of Wilson. 'She was in her great condition a good woman, not tempted from that height she stood on, to embroil her spirit much with things below her (as some busy bodies do),

* Birch's MSS. apud Nicholl's Progresses.

only giving herself content in her own house with such recreations as might not make time tedious to her: and though great persons actions are often pried into, and made envy's mark, yet nothing could be fixed upon her, that left any great impression, but that she may have engraven upon her monument a character of virtue.' She was a remarkably affable queen, and very gracious to the people when she appeared abroad, frequently bowing, smiling, and talking to them, from her carriage; which caused her to be called 'the *good* Queen Anne.' There is a portrait of her in Strutt's Costumes, representing her in the dress and decorations of the age—a long waist, wide sleeves, and enormous farthingale, all bedizened over with strings of jewels—the whole figure as stiff and unnatural as a peacock. It is said to have been she who introduced the farthingale into England, and, by consequence, the hoop. Her jewels are stated to have been valued at her death at 400,000*l.*; the half of her whole fortune. Her property, however, was much dilapidated by servants, before it came into the hands of her heir.

The ostensible ailments of the King at this time were gout and defluxions upon his knees;* which almost deprived him of the use of his limbs. But the chief malady was probably more of a mental than of a bodily nature, arising out of grief for his wife's death, vexation about the imprudence of his son-in-law the Elector Palatine, and troubles on the subject of the Spanish match. 'The world,' says Mr Chamberlain, 'is tenderly affected towards him, and I assure you all men apprehend

* About this time he had a second attack of stone.

what a loss we should have if God should take him from us, and do earnestly enquire, and in general heartily wish and pray, for his welfare.' On the 10th of April, about six weeks after the Queen's decease, the symptoms were so violent, that he himself apprehended immediate dissolution, and 'prepared to settle things as if he were to leave all, and to that end made an excellent speech to the Prince before all the Lords then present;' in particular, recommending him to keep company with bishops. His conduct on this occasion was manly and king-like. On getting somewhat better a few days afterwards, he removed to Roystoun, carried all the way in a chair by his guard. Subsequently, he was transported to Theobald's in a litter; where, 'as weak and weary as he was, he would not settle within doors till he had his deer brought to make a muster before him;'* a remarkable instance of the ruling passion, strong under the most discouraging circumstances. Here he was fortunately able to recover the use of his limbs, to a certain extent, by a strange expedient—bathing them amidst the warm bowels of the deer after the animal was hunted down and cut open. With his usual imprudence, he was no sooner a little relieved than, spite of all that his physicians could say, he resumed his habitual bad practice of eating fruits and drinking sweet wines. †

* Mr Chamberlain, *Winwood*.

† May 1619. The King was at this time more than once way-laid in his parks by religious madmen, who delivered messages to him as from God in loud oracular voices—no doubt, to his Majesty's great annoyance. One Weekes, who had been a soldier abroad, came up to him one day in Theobald's Park, crying, "Stand, O King," and adding, when the King stopped, "Thus saith the Lord, have I not brought thee out of a land of famine and hunger,

He does not seem to have long worn mourning for his consort. On the 1st of June, within three months of her decease, he made his first entry into London after his illness, 'fresh in a suit of watchet satin, laid with a blue and white feather; as also his horse was furnisht with the like, both before and behind; insomuch that all the company was glad to see him look so gallant, and *more like a wooer than a mourner*.' On this occasion, almost all the public bodies in London testified their joy in his recovery, by congratulations—including the whole *choir* of the judges and lawyers, as he was pleased to term them.

James, about this time, exercised his faculty of detecting impostures, in one of the most remarkable cases of defamation that ever fell under the notice of English law. The Earl of Exeter, elder brother of the late Secretary Cecil, married in his old age a young and amiable lady, who unfortunately quarrelled soon after with Lady Roos, wife of the Earl's grandson, by his first marriage. This Lady Roos was a daughter of Sir Thomas Lake, one of the King's Secretaries. She, in concert with her mother Lady Lake, formed the diabolical design of ruining the Countess, by accusing her of having had an intrigue with Lord Roos, who

into a land of plenty and abundance? Ought'st thou not therefore to have judged my people with righteous judgment? But thou hast perverted judgment, and not relieved the oppressed. Therefore, unless thou repent, God hath rent the kingdom from thee and thy posterity after thee!" Being taken into custody and examined, he declared himself a priest of the order of Melchisedec. From his description of Scotland, no *Scotchman* could doubt for a moment that he was a lying prophet, or mad. Such was the immediate impression of the King, and the poor wretch was consigned to Bedlam.

was now abroad on a foreign embassy. On this charge becoming matter of public conversation, the King called the parties singly before him, and examined them; when the Countess asseverated her innocence with tears and imprecations, against which Lady Lake and Lady Roos produced a letter, apparently signed by her own hand, in which she confessed her guilt. James immediately dispatched a sergeant-at-arms to Rome, to subject Lord Roos to an examination; and that nobleman sent back testimonials respectably signed, to attest that there was no foundation for the charge. As there was still a doubt, however, about this evidence, he resolved to prosecute the inquiry. The question finally seemed to hinge on the soothfastness of a chambermaid, who was brought forward by the accusing ladies, to swear that she had overheard the letter dictated by them to the Countess, as an apology, from behind the hangings of a particular window in the hall of the Earl of Exeter's house of Wimbledon. James thought proper to digress one day from a hunting-match, in order to inspect the hall where this transaction was said to have taken place. Placing himself where the chambermaid was said to have stood, he ascertained that it was impossible from that point to overhear what was spoken by even a loud voice at the place where the parties were represented as having been seated; and, furthermore, from the shortness of the hangings, he saw that no person could have been concealed in such a place. "Oaths," said he, on this discovery, "cannot confound my sight;" and he resolved to subject the whole matter to a trial in the Star-chamber. So eager was he in this proceeding, that he sat for several days in the court, as president, three, four,

and five hours at a time. The result was a verdict in favour of the injured Countess, with heavy fines imposed upon the guilty ladies.

The circumstance most to be lamented about this case, was, that all the punishment fell upon Sir Thomas Lake, who was a man of great worth and respectability, and only unfortunate in having such a wife and daughter. The King had previously advised him not to take part in the accusation laid by the ladies; but he nobly said, that he could not refuse to be a husband and a father, and, so putting his name with theirs in a cross bill, was condemned as a party, and onerated to pay all the fines. The affair cost him altogether 30,000*l.*, and lost him all his places, as well as the King's favour. James took occasion, in pronouncing judgment, to pass a severe censure upon the fair sex, and especially upon such of them as, like the condemned parties present, were of the Romish religion. 'He exhorted the judges,' says an unceremonious court gossip, 'to have a special care of the Papists, and likewise of their wives; for he said the women were the nourishers of Papistry in this kingdom, and a Papist woman and a . . . . . were *voces convertibiles;* which our Catholic ladies take very ill.' What strange language, the reader will say, to be used by a prince who was in treaty for a Catholic princess as a wife to his son! But his persecution of the sex by no means stopped here. For some time after, we find him taking every opportunity of declaiming against what he calls 'high-handed women.' He actually set a fashion on the subject in society. 'Our pulpits,' says a letter-writer, February 1620, 'ring continually of the insolency and impudence of wo-

men; and, to help forward, the players have likewise taken them to task; so that they can come no where but their ears tingle. And all this will not serve; the King threatens to fall upon their parents, husbands, or friends, that have or should have power over them, and make *them* pay for it.' James's antipathy to the more masculine of the sex has already been remarked. It is exceedingly amusing to observe, that, in a conversation about this time with the Earl of Salisbury, who had an audience on the occasion of his marriage, he cross-questions the young peer about his wife, from a wish to ascertain whether she was a simple good matron, or a '*high-handed*' dame.*

* His antipathy or indifference to women was partly natural; but it was much exaggerated at this period, by an attempt which was made by a Roman Catholic lady, to found a female school of Jesuits for the propagation of their faith. Some curious traits of his behaviour to ladies are found in the following extract from a Harleian manuscript, which refers to the meeting of the parliament of 1621:—

'In the King's short progress from Whitehall to Westminster, these passages following were accounted somewhat remarkable:—First, that he spake often and lovingly to the people standing thick and threefold on all sides to behold him: "God bless ye! God bless ye!" contrary to his former hasty and passionate custom, which often, in his sudden distemper, would bid a pox or plague on such as flocked to see him. Secondly, that though the windows were filled with many great ladies as he rode along, yet he spake to none of them but to the Marquis of Buckingham's mother and wife. Thirdly, that he spake particularly and bowed to the Count of Gondemar, the Spanish ambassador; and fourthly, that, looking up to one window as he passed, full of gentlemen and ladies, all in yellow bands, he cried aloud, "A pox take ye, are ye there!" at which, being much ashamed, they all withdrew themselves suddenly from the window.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPANISH MATCH.

1620–1623.

It has just been mentioned, that James experienced much uneasiness about this time, on the double account of the affairs of his son-in-law, the Elector Palatine, and of the Spanish match which he wished to obtain for his son. The case was simply as follows:—The Elector Palatine, the Protestant ruler of one of the provinces of Germany, had been induced to put himself at the head of the neighbouring nation of the Bohemians, who were in a state of rebellion against their superior the Emperor of Germany. By taking that step, it will be observed that the Elector was guilty of the same indiscretion as the Bohemians, because he was also the vassal of the Emperor. Being unsuccessful in his attempt, he was, quite in the natural course of things, expelled not only from his usurped rule over Bohemia, but also from his patrimonial dominions on the Rhine.

The character of the Elector Palatine was not one calculated to interest the feelings. He was sordid and mean-spirited, the most unkingly of all vices, and those which are perhaps most despised

of all others in every class of men. One fact in his history ought to put him beyond the pale of sympathy:—When returning from Amsterdam, which he had visited, in order to look after some hoards in the bank of that city, having chosen for frugality the common packet-boat, overloaded with merchandise, the vessel overset; his eldest son, who accompanied him, clung to the rigging, but being unable to endure the rigour of the cold, was found the next morning frozen to death, and half immersed in the water. He is also supposed to have lost the battle of Prague, by which his fortunes were decided, in consequence of some ill-timed economy. Neither personal character, however, nor the merits of his cause, were ever taken into account by the English people in judging of the King's conduct in regard to him. They saw in him only a Protestant suffering at the hands of a Catholic, and, without a moment's consideration as to which was in the wrong, they at once, and most unanimously, advocated a crusade in his favour.

King James took a cooler view of the case. He considered the conduct of the Bohemians and their pretended sovereign as a reprehensible rising of the subjects against their superior. He was also offended at the Elector for having taken such a step without consulting him, more especially as he professed to have proceeded in expectation of assistance from Great Britain. Perhaps he also knew the character of his son-in-law better than his subjects did, and might not feel himself inspired by that enthusiastic partisanship which they displayed in his favour. There were also considerations of the good of his country, which might incline the

King to hesitate before throwing himself and his people into a war, the object of which, even if fully and victoriously accomplished, could, after all, only gratify their desire of cutting and slashing a different denomination of Christians. Where was the money to carry on a war? What was the end to be served by it?

It might be the subject of a deeply interesting treatise, to inquire into the motives which the English have had for all their wars since the Reformation. First, there come the wars of Elizabeth's time, undertaken for the purpose of enabling the Dutch to praise God and cheat mankind in their own cold-blooded way. Then there was the war with Spain, in the end of James's reign and the beginning of that of Charles, the object of which was to give the Protestant spirit of persecution some exercise against the Catholics. Next, were the Civil Wars, which, like the stroke of God upon Egypt, took a victim from every family in the nation, and left it at the Restoration under deeper tyranny than that from which it had been struggling to free itself. Then there were wars against the scoundrel Dutch, for the purpose of undoing all that had been done sixty years before. The wars of King William follow, which again gratified the public with the pleasure of belabouring the Catholics;—and here came in the grand novelty of fighting upon credit. The wars of Queen Anne had the same end, and were carried on by the same means. We still have the pleasure of paying a yearly sum for the gratification and the glory which our great-grandfathers derived from this source: We still pay each our penny for the thwacks bestowed by Marlborough upon the shoul-

ders of the Grand Monarque. The wars of George the Second, in support of the Emperor of Germany, were all of the same complexion; still the grand object was to vent our spite at the children of the Pope, and advance the interests of those who, like ourselves, have had the good sense to abjure him. The wars since that period have had ends partaking more of this world. Yet it is surprising to think that men may still be alive who fought against the ancient bugbear of Rome—against an idea which, in the present generation, haunts only the minds of old women. It is surprising to think, that the history of the nation for two centuries should be that of religious contentions, ending in no good result; and that, till very lately, men devoted the best energies of their minds, and did not scruple to impose pecuniary obligations upon their remotest posterity, for the insane purpose of gratifying merely devotional predilections. *

As the world now enters into wars for ends a little more discreet than formerly, it may be at a loss to conceive the popular feeling of the age under re-

* One gratification, we must allow, is left to us who pay for these frolics of our forefathers. It is not likely, after the lessons which those respected personages have left to us, that another drop of blood will ever be spilt in Europe on the same account. The world, 'older now and wiser grown,' has at length, to all appearance, got into a habit of considering every thing with an express view to its probable effects upon the real, practical, solid interests of the community. And it is improbable that we shall ever again discompose ourselves, to challenge a nation for its situation on the other side of a narrow channel, or the different way which its clergy has of putting on their gowns.

view, which tended so violently towards a contest with the Catholic powers of Europe. The truth is, England at that time was like a man who, having just escaped from a great and imminent danger, starts and draws his sword, for some time after, at every little noise he hears, or every time his elbow is touched by accident. The nation still tingled in every fibre from the excitement of the two ages which succeeded the Reformation: they still recollected with horror the frights of St Bartholomew and the Armada; and, although the Catholic governments and individuals had alike, to all appearance, long given up all notion of proselytizing Britain by force, still the nation dreaded their machinations, still thought itself far from safe. From this fear, mingled with religious malice and the desire of revenge, the people with one voice urged that a war should be declared against Spain and Austria, in behalf of the Elector Palatine.

James, who could hardly ever procure the necessary money for his ordinary peacee-stablishment, and who was animated by wiser and less enthusiastic views, hesitated to gratify his subjects on this score, and adopted the more gentle expedient of endeavouring to re-instate his son-in-law, by matching his son Charles to the daughter of the King of Spain, who, from his near connection with the House of Austria, seemed able to procure him that favour. It is generally asserted, that he betrayed an unnatural degree of indifference to the interests of his daughter and her unfortunate husband; and a story is told, that, on his forbidding the Palatine to be prayed for by his assumed title in the churches, the Prince of Orange remarked him to be a strange person, who would

neither fight nor pray for his children. There can be no doubt, however, that in reality, though sensible of the folly of that Prince, he took a strong interest in his fortunes, and indeed exerted himself as much, *in his own particular way*, in his favour, as a man of more warlike character could have done by arms. The numerous expensive embassies which he fitted out in his behalf, and the great troubles he encountered in negotiating the alliance with Spain, are sensible proofs of this. A particular anecdote may also be mentioned: On the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London applying to him to inquire if he would sanction their raising a loan of 100,000*l.*, which the Palatine had begged of them, he answered that, though he could not expressly countenance such a proceeding, he should be extremely glad to see them do that, or any thing else, to serve his unfortunate relative.

James's line of conduct in this business, it must be observed, as in many other transactions of his life, was more apt to be of real practical service to the nation, than to excite its admiration or gratitude. The public, I am afraid, will always think more highly of the man who defends his head by hard blows, than of him who saves it by the law, or by soothing words to the assailant. Probably, if the religious desire of war with the Catholic powers had been altogether out of the question, his conduct could not have given satisfaction to so high-spirited a nation as the English. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that he was now assailed, in addition to his ordinary miseries, moral and physical, with the stinging one of public sarcasm and ridicule—that, in some caricatures, he was represented with a scabbard which wanted a sword; in

cubess, with a sword which several men seemed in vain endeavouring to withdraw from the scabbard; and in a third species, the humour of which was still more malicious, with a cradle in his arms, which he was lugging along after his unhappy daughter, she in her turn being set forth in the dress, or rather undress, of a poor Irishwoman, with her hair hanging about her ears, and her child on her back. Or that, in some plays at Brussels, part of the dominions of his proposed ally the King of Spain, messengers were represented, as Wilson informs us, 'bringing news in haste, that the Palatinate was likely to have a very formidable army shortly on foot; the King of Denmark was to furnish him with a hundred thousand pickled herrings the Hollanders with a hundred thousand butter boxes, and England with a hundred thousand ambassadors!'

It was just when, in the midst of this disagreeable concatination of circumstances, (1621), that he was obliged, after an interval of seven years, to call a new parliament for the purpose of raising supplies. The parliaments of that time, it must be remarked, were amazingly fair representations of the public mind. They were, as expressly as could be supposed, the mouth-piece of the nation. As might be conjectured, he experienced from them nothing but censure for his foreign policy, and petitions against the Spanish match. The House of Commons thought it necessary to present a very free remonstrance to him, in regard to his late conduct in these matters; a liberty which he was disposed to resent in the sharpest terms. When the deputation came to present it, he bustled about in a great passion, though keeping up a face of the

utmost gravity, and called for chairs to accommodate the *twelve kings* who had come to visit him! It was not altogether without cause that he reckoned the impertinence of these parliamentary archons. As an instance of the absurdity of their demands, they gravely requested that he should take the children of Catholics out of the hands of their parents, and forcibly educate them under Protestant schoolmasters. They also pointed out the small Protestant princesses of Germany as presenting a good choice of mistresses for his son. James had too much sincere liberality of feeling to adopt the first measure, and was too proud to adopt the second*—which was, moreover, inauspicious from the fate of the Princess Elizabeth as wife of the Elector Palatine. After a great deal of unprofitable wrangling, he found it necessary to dissolve this turbulent assembly.

These unpleasant circumstances, joined to the pains of various acute diseases, seem to have nearly broken the formerly serene temper of the King; and he is said, by Wilson, to have given way, at this time, to the following, among other instances of ill humour. It being one day necessary to refer to some papers of importance relating to his negotiations with Spain, which had not been for some time in his hands, he set himself to recollect where, or in whose hands, he had deposited them; but, probably from the distempered condition of

* The prejudice which caused the King to reject every proposal of a match for his son under royal rank, was a branch of his grand prejudice about the divinity of Kings. He thought that it was necessary, in order to preserve that divinity to his posterity, that there should be no admixture of inferior blood in the race.

his mind, was unable for a long while to come to any conclusion regarding them. At length, it struck him that he had given the papers to John Gib, one of his old Scotch servants. Gib, however, denied having ever received them. The King stormed at this, and persisted in asseverating that Gib must have them; which caused the man to throw himself at his Majesty's feet, and offer himself for immediate death in the event of its being found that he had told an untruth. James not only disregarded the asseveration, but was actually provoked, in the heat of the moment, to give Gib a kick in passing. On this the servant rose up, with dignified and just anger, and said to the King, "Sir, I have served you from my youth, and you never found me unfaithful; I have not deserved this from you, nor can I live longer with you after this disgrace: fare ye well, Sir; I will never see your face more." And accordingly he left the royal presence, took horse for London, and was soon far on his way. This unhappy affair was no sooner talked of in the court, than it came to the ears of Endymion Porter, another of James's confidential servants, who, immediately recollecting that the King had given him the papers, went and brought them to his Majesty. The behaviour of the monarch, on discovering his mistake, showed that a generous nature was at the bottom of all his absurdities. He immediately called for Gib. Answer was made that he had gone to London. "Then let him be overtaken, and called back with all expedition," cried the King, "for I protest I shall never again eat, drink, or sleep, till I see him." Gib being accordingly brought back, James knelt down upon

his knees before him (credite, posteri!) and, 'with a grave and sober face,' as Wilson relates the story, 'entreated his pardon, declaring he should not rise till he obtained it.' Gib, put to shame by this strange reversal of postures, endeavoured to raise his master; but James would, upon no account, rise till 'he heard the words of absolution pronounced.' It is added, that he made Gib no loser by the temporary demission of his place.

We are now arrived at that most remarkable part of James's life, the journey which his son made to Spain, in 1623, to see the Infanta. The King had now been treating for several years with Spain, for the double purpose of marrying Prince Charles, and getting the Elector Palatine re-instated. He had spent much money and much pains upon the negotiation, the only effect of which, as yet, was to render him unpopular and miserable. The Spanish court, either averse at heart from the match, or sincerely scrupulous on account of the different creeds of the parties, had put him off from year to year, under the pretext of difficulty as to the necessary dispensation from the Pope. His Catholic Majesty, the brother of the young lady, had now been brought almost to his last shift; and the treaty was on the point of being successfully closed by the Earl of Bristol, the British ambassador at Madrid, when a new turn was given to the whole affair by the romantic adventure of Prince Charles.

The character of this personage seems to have been considerably different in youth from what it was in advanced life. It was now chiefly distinguished for a peculiar ductility and gentleness, which rendered him the slave of every stronger

mind within whose influence he came. Buckingham, not failing to observe the increasing infirmities of the King, had for some time past attached himself very much to the heir-apparent. His age being a few years greater than that of the prince, he became his tutor in all those branches of knowledge which the youth just springing into manhood naturally seeks from him who has recently attained it. They had become inseparable friends. Charles, besides being a youth of soft character, was given to romantic adventure. Like most men of taste and genius—and he certainly was one of the two—he was not disposed, at least at this early period of his life, to act in a manner exactly accordant with the usual routine of existence. The sun of chivalry, which set two ages before, still shed its soft twilight over him; and, though not so enthusiastic, probably, as to wish to become an actual mailed knight-errant, he cherished a good deal of the sentiment of that lustrous phrenzy, and coined his thoughts, at least, his hopes, and wishes, in the moulds which it had left.

Buckingham had begun to fear that, if Bristol should be permitted to accomplish the match by himself, he would thereby acquire so much favour and eclát as to prove a serious rival. He resolved that it should not be so; and the only expedient he could think of, was to induce the prince to accompany him to Spain, and there, with his more immediate assistance and counsel, conclude the negotiation in person. It required little persuasion to procure Charles's consent to such a scheme. He had only to represent the pleasure there would be in seeing the Princess before marriage, and gaining her heart before procuring her hand, the

glory which would result from such a violent eccentricity in the usual courtship of princes, and the charm of a tour through that poetic land—in that age, it must be remembered, the favourite field of romance—in order to make his Royal Highness as much in love with the project as himself. The only difficulty that then remained, was to procure the King's consent.

Clarendon has fortunately left a most minute and characteristic account of the interviews which the two young men had with Majesty before obtaining his permission. Taking an opportunity when nobody was with him but themselves, Charles threw himself upon his knees before him, and, explaining his wishes, entreated, in the most passionate language, for leave to carry them into execution. James was less surprised at the proposal than they expected—being probably familiarized with the idea, in consequence of the somewhat similar adventure of his own youth. He only looked, in his usual simple way, to the Marquess of Buckingham, as if to hear what he should say in regard to the scheme. Buckingham then gave his counsel at some length, the gist of which was, that *Baby Charles*—for so he was called by the King and Buckingham—should be permitted to go, because he had too earnestly set his heart upon it, to be safely forbidden. Charles, then perceiving some signs of a favourable disposition in his father's countenance, struck in with a detail of all the good effects which might result from his own personal presence in the Spanish court—the impulse which it would give to the negotiation, and the success it might have in securing the restitution of the Palatinate. Completely taken off

his guard, the monarch gave a kind of bewildered consent to his son's entreaties, in which at the first he was unable to see any thing but what they had represented, a prospect of speedily accomplishing what for some years had been the chief end of all his foreign policy.

A single night, however, served to make James sensible of the difficulties and dangers of the scheme, and when the two adventurers again approached him next day, he broke out into a passion of tears, telling them that he was undone, and should break his heart if they persisted in their resolution, that not only would the prince's person be hazarded by it, but the prospects of the match would probably be destroyed, while he himself should incur the reprobation of his subjects for consenting to it; and he ended a long harangue, as he had begun, with a violent fit of grief. Hereupon, the Marquess assumed a tone, which may well make us wonder at the extreme simplicity of the royal character. He told his Majesty, that nobody could believe a word he said; that he must have been furnished with *those pitiful reasons* he alleged against the journey, by some rascal to whom he had communicated their secret; and that, if he persisted in refusing to give his consent, it must create an irreparable breach between him and his son. James could not bear this. Rude language from Buckingham, and the fear of giving displeasure to his son, were too much to be endured at once. He therefore, a second time, gave an unwilling assent to the proposal.

It being then resolved that the Prince and Duke should set off immediately in disguise, and with only two attendants, the King called in Sir Francis

Cottington, the Prince's Secretary, who, from having been long in Spain, was judged fit to be of the party. Sir Francis having entered the room, James said to him, "Cottington, here is Baby Charles and Steenie, who have a great mind to go to Spain, to fetch home the Infanta, and will have but two more in their company, and have chosen you for one. What think you of the journey?" Cottington, as he afterwards acknowledged, trembled so violently at the imprudence of the proposal, or the fear of offending some one or other of the parties present, that he could scarcely speak. On recovering a little, he candidly expressed an unfavourable opinion of the scheme, representing that it would tempt the Spaniards to take advantage of their possession of the prince's person, to force him into such terms as they pleased on the score of religion; by which the people of England would be implacably offended. Upon this the King's former fears revived, and he threw himself upon his bed in a renewed passion of tears, crying that he should lose Baby Charles, and be utterly undone.

Buckingham now fell into a rage with Cottington, and made no scruple to insult him with a torrent of abusive language. This gave a new turn to the poor King's emotions. He feared lest Cottington, for whom he entertained deserved respect, should come to mischief for his honest answer. "Nay, by God, Steenie," cried he, "you are very much to blame, to use him so. He answered me directly to the question I asked him, and very honestly and wisely; and yet you knew he said no more than I told you before he was called in." After this strange *scene*, the King again yielded to the wishes of his two babies, and the plan of the journey was fully agreed upon.

They set forward on Tuesday, the 18th of February, disguised with false beards, and in the habiliments of ordinary gentlemen, the Marquess bearing the name of Mr Thomas Smith, and the Prince that of Mr John. Their only attendant at first was Sir Richard Graham, master of horse to the Marquess. As they crossed the Thames at Gravesend, (for it was from Newhall, in Essex, * that they set out), they were obliged, for want of silver, to give the ferryman a gold piece; which generosity overpowered him so completely, that, thinking they were about to cross the seas to fight a duel, and being quite melted with pity at such a thought, he gave information of them to the public authorities of the town. A person was accordingly dispatched after them to Rochester, to arrest them; and they only escaped by not halting at that town. On the brow of the hill beyond Rochester, they were greatly perplexed at seeing the French ambassador coming in the opposite direction in his coach, attended by the King's carriage and a number of others; however, by leaping a few fences, and taking a circuit through the fields, they also escaped that danger. 'At Canterbury,' says Sir Henry Wotton, in his life of Buckingham, 'whither some voice, as it should seem, was run on before, the Mayor of the town came himself to seize on them, as they were taking fresh horses, in a blunt manner, alleging first a warrant to stop them from the Council, next from Sir Lewis Lewkner, master of the ceremonies, and lastly from Sir Henry Mainwaring, then lieutenant of Dover Castle. At all which confused fic-

* A house of the Marquess.

tion the Marquess had no leisure to laugh, but thought best to dismask his beard, and so told him that he was going covertly with such slight company, to take a secret view (being Admiral) of the forwardness of his Majestie's fleet, which was then in preparation in the narrow seas.' This satisfied the worthy magistrate. In the further prosecution of their journey, a post-boy, who had been at court, plainly showed that he knew who they were; but, as Sir Henry Wotton remarks, '*his* mouth was easily shut.' According to appointment, Sir Francis Cottington and Endymion Porter, the only two persons who were chosen to accompany them, had already arrived at Dover, and hired a vessel to carry them over to France. The evening, however, proving stormy, they did not sail till next morning. A few hours sufficed to carry them over to Boulogne; and before that evening they had proceeded one or two stages into France. Continuing their journey on the succeeding day, they arrived, on the next again, at Paris; having once or twice been suspected, but never actually discovered, to be the Prince of Wales and Marquess of Buckingham.

Having resolved to spend the day after their arrival in seeing the court and other wonders of Paris, they supplied themselves each with a periwig, to cover their foreheads and deepen their disguise,* and then sallied forth into the city. They had the good fortune to see the young French monarch (Louis XIII.) at dinner, from a gallery, and afterwards the Queen-mother, without being dis-

* Periwigs were just about this time beginning to be used, without a regard to baldness.—*Wilson.*

covered at either place, though one of the persons who saw them there was Monsieur Cadinet, who had lately been ambassador in England. Towards the evening, as they were walking along a street, they found themselves become involved in a press of people who were all hurrying one way. Yielding themselves to this current, they were carried towards a place where the King's consort and sister, with a number of great court-ladies, were practising a masqueing dance, which was then in preparation. The greater part of the crowd were excluded from this spectacle; but Jack and Tom Smith were admitted, in consideration of their being strangers. Owing to this characteristic piece of politeness on the part of the French, Charles here got a peep at the Queen, the elder sister of the Spanish princess whom he was going to see, and also at the Princess Henrietta Maria, who was destined eventually to become his wife. In a joint letter to King James, the Prince and Marquess talk of this as an extraordinary piece of good fortune; and Charles makes the remark, that, as the Queen was the handsomest among twenty women whom he saw there, he had so much the greater desire to see her sister. He makes no remark upon Henrietta.

It is remarkable that, though their departure had been intrusted to no one besides the King, it was known at London on the first night, and very publicly talked of next morning. It spread a great alarm over the whole country; and, for a considerable time, nothing was talked of but the danger into which the heir-apparent had thrown himself, in trusting his person to foreigners and Catholics, who might make the possession of it the

means of wringing better terms from him, in a match which in itself was by no means eligible. The event proved, that Catholics and foreigners were possessed of the principles of honour as well as the Protestant English; but as yet nothing of that kind was so much as imagined. It was even feared by many that the Prince would never again be permitted to return to them. When James found that the expedition was no longer a secret, he despatched the Earl of Carlisle after the young travellers, to give them his advice and attendance, sent others to excuse their non-appearance at the French court to King Louis, and prepared a fleet to sail to Spain, with a retinue suitable to their rank, and to bring them home. *

After a journey of ten or twelve days, the Prince and Marquess reached Madrid late in a Saturday evening, and immediately made themselves known to the Earl of Bristol, the English ambas-

* He also issued a precept to the clergy, commanding them not to make the Prince's journey a matter of discussion in the pulpit, but simply 'to pray to God *to preserve him in his journey, and grant him a safe return unto us*, and no more, nor in any other words.' 'An honest plain preacher,' says Dr Mead in a contemporary letter, 'being loth to transgress the order given, desired in his prayer, "That God would returne our noble Prince home in safety to us again, *and no more*:" supposing the words *no more* to be a piece of the prayer enjoyned.' The King is found at this time writing the following brief letter to Baby Charles and Steenie:—

'Sweet Boyes, the Newis of your going is allreaddie to blowin abroade, as I ame forcid for youre safetie to poste this bearare after you, quho will give you his best advyce and attendance in your journey. God blesse you both, my sweet babes, and send you a safe and happie returne.—

JAMES, R.'

sador, who received them, as it may be supposed, with no small surprise. The ensuing day was not far advanced, before it was publicly rumoured in the city that a man of great distinction—some surmised the King of Great Britain—had arrived; and the Spanish monarch, about the same time, became aware of the real fact of the case, though etiquette would not permit him to take any notice of it. That evening, in consequence of an arrangement with the Conde D'Olivares, the King came incognito, and had a conference with the Prince at the lodgings of the Earl of Bristol. Their meeting was, to appearance, a very cordial one.

'Towards the evening of Saturday, * the Marquis went in a close coach to court, where he had private audience of the King; who sent Olivares (prime minister of Spain) to accompany him back to the Prince. Olivarez there kneeled and kissed his hands, and hugged his thighs, and declared how immeasureably glad his Catholic Majesty was of his coming, with other high compliments, which Mr Porter did interpret. About ten o'clock that night, the King came in a close coach, with intent to visit the Prince, who, hearing of it, met him half-way; and, after salutations, and divers embraces, they parted late. Next day, in the afternoon, the King came abroad to take the air, with the queen, his two brothers, and the Infanta, all in one coach; the Infanta sitting in the boot, with a blue ribbon about her arm, of purpose that the Prince might distinguish her; and above twenty coaches of grandees, noblemen, and ladies, attended them. The Prince taking coach a little after,

* Howell's Letters.

went to the Prado, a place hard by the Earl of Bristol's house, where he staid till the King passed by. As soon as the Infanta saw the Prince, her colour rose very high; which we hold to be an impression of love and affection.' Charles found his mistress a fair-haired girl of sixteen, with a complexion of pure red and white; personal characteristics which she would appear to have derived from her German, rather than her Spanish ancestors.

There can be no doubt that he experienced the best treatment, in all external matters, that the Spanish court could bestow upon him. He was admitted to reside in the palace, with the privilege of a master-key, which could open all the King's apartments. The King himself gave him his right hand on all occasions. The Conde D'Olivarez, although a grandee of Spain, and therefore privileged to wear his hat before the King, always uncovered in Charles's presence. Into all, the council received orders to obey him as the King himself. The real end of his journey, however, was not facilitated by all these civilities. The Spaniards universally believed that he never could have undertaken such an expedition, without some intention of becoming a proselyte to the Infanta's religion. The court, therefore, retarded the negotiations, in the hope that a little time spent amidst them would reconcile him to a change of faith; an object, be it remarked, in which this people was as sincerely anxious, as the English could have been in regard to a corresponding change of the Infanta's creed. They even caused the Pope to write a letter to his Royal Highness, for the purpose of attempting his conversion. Charles answered it in civil terms; but

remained firm in that faith for which he was destined to die a martyr.

The time of his residence in Spain was spent in a ceaseless round of amusements—banquets, bull-fights, and tournaments—and he soon became a prodigious favourite with the people. The peculiar circumstances of his journey seem to have really made a deep impression on the hearts of this romantic nation. They conceived, that a man who could devise and execute a project so daring and chivalrous, deserved his mistress, as fairly as the knight who rescues her, at the peril of his life, from the castle of an oppressive giant; and they manifestly regretted that religion should still interpose a bar between them. Wherever he appeared in public, he was received with shouts of "Viva el Principe de Galles!" and many exclaimed that he should, without further ado, have his mistress thrown into his arms. His expedition, and his personal character, formed the theme of innumerable poets and miscellaneous writers, so as to become completely embalmed in that Augustan age of Spanish literature. *

* One stanza of a canzonet written on the occasion, by the celebrated Lopez de Vega, has chanced to wander to this country:—

Carlos Estuardo soy,
Que siendo amor mi guia
Al cielo de España voy
Por ver nir estrella Maria.

Translated thus:

Charles Stuart am I;
Love has guided me far
To this fair Spanish sky,
To see Mary my star.

There was, however, one disagreeable circumstance in his situation, over and above the misery arising from the endless negotiations. He was allowed to have very little intercourse with his mistress. When it is recollected, that one of his chief reasons for undertaking the journey, was the hope of gaining the Infanta's heart by personal application, it may be conceived with what fret of soul he endured the distance at which he was kept from her by the etiquette of the court—with what impatience he beheld the formal circle of which some segment or other was ever interposed between them. Even the formality of an interpreter was not judged a sufficient guard upon him; there were always some courtiers, besides, or some duenna of unrelenting brow, to observe that their interviews were conducted with propriety. But, indeed, he seldom or never saw her, except in public places, where the eyes of a whole multitude were perpetually fixed upon him. He never for a moment enjoyed the pleasure for which he had travelled so far, that of pouring his warm impassioned feelings into her ear, and pressing to his own tumultuous breast the heart which he wished to gain. Under these circumstances, scarcely knowing whether he loved or not, he is said to have sometimes sat at court-feasts, with his eyes fixed upon her in a kind of trance for half an hour unremittingly. At other times, he was known to wait in his coach for hours upon the street, merely that he might have the gratification of catching one momentary glimpse of her person as she passed. There is a strange story told, that, at length tired out of all patience with this chilling system, he forcibly endeavoured to procure an interview,

by leaping the enclosure of a garden where she was gathering May-dew; that, seeing her there by herself, he rushed towards her—had almost approached her—was going to throw himself at her feet—when, lo and behold, in rushed an old Marquis, the chief guardian of her sacred person, who, falling upon his knees before the Prince, conjured him to retire immediately, as, if he should be permitted to approach the Infanta, his (the Marquis's) head must pay the penalty. This, on the first of May, a day dedicated, time out of mind, to amorous inclinations, must have been particularly hard. We soon after find the Marchioness of Buckingham, talking seriously, in a letter, of some *perspective glasses* which she was commissioned to send out to the Prince from England, it having been at last found absolutely necessary to employ the phenomena of optics, to enable his Royal Highness to gratify himself even with the sight of his mistress. †

It may be amusing to trace the conduct of the King during the absence of his 'sweete boyis.' It was, upon the whole, more composed than

† Archy Armstrong, who joined the party at Madrid, is said to have made farther way than his betters at the Spanish court. Privileged by his fool's coat, he was one day flirting about in the Infanta's company, when somebody happened to make the remark, that it was surely wonderful how 15,000 men, under the Duke of Bavaria, should have discomfited the army of the Elector Palatine, which consisted of 25,000. To this Archy answered, that he could tell them a more wonderful thing than that. "Was it not strange," quoth he, "that, in the year 88, there should come a fleet of a hundred and forty sail from Spain to invade England, and that ten of these should not go back to tell what became of the rest?"

might have been expected from the behaviour which Clarendon attributes to him before their departure. He endeavoured to beguile the tedium of their absence, by maintaining with them a very close and regular correspondence, he, writing with his own hand, and in the most familiar style, while they answered in joint letters, composed in the same easy strain. It shows the strength of his affection towards them, that he should have written a letter on each of the three successive days, February 26, 27, and 28; altogether an extraordinary effort for him, considering the habitual 'sweirnes at the pen,' which he acknowledges in his letter to the Scottish council from Denmark in 1589, and taking into account, moreover, that, as he himself says in the letter of the 26th, 'their poor olde Dade is lamer now than ever he was; both in his right knee and foote, and wryttes all this out of his naked bedde.' He makes a boast, on the 15th of March, about a month after Buckingham and Prince Charles went away, of having also written 'fyve to Kaite [the Marchioness of Buckingham], two to Su [the Countess of Denbigh, sister to Buckingham], and one to thy mother, Steenie, and all with my awin hande.' In his letter of the 28th, dated at Newmarket, he says to them, in conclusion, 'I have no more to telle, but that I wear Steenie's picture in a blew ribben, under my wastcoate, nexte my hearte!' This would justify a surmise that there was something in James's attachment to favourites, like the sentiment which pervades the breasts of lovers. It is a trait of the *effeminacy* of his character, and reminds us of the craze of an old lady who has

been smitten by the charms of some blooming young man.

It may perhaps be said, that the character of the King is no where so distinctly traced as in these strange epistles. He seems to have thrown his whole heart into them, unrestrained by the slightest suspicion of their ever becoming public; and thinking of nothing but how he might give pleasure to his correspondents. They seem in every respect to be as perfectly the expression of his real mind, as the most unreserved words he could have uttered in his private chamber, where the man of state commonly undresses both mind and body. The following, for instance, which he wrote on the 1st of April, in answer to a question they had put to him, contains some striking self-drawn traits of his character: 'I wonder quhy ye showlde aske me the question if ye showlde sende me any more jointe letres or not; alace! sweete hairtis, it is all my comfort in your absence that ye wrytte jointlie unto me, besydes the great ease it is both to me and you; and ye neede not doubte but I will be wairie enough in not acquainting my Counsell with any secreate in your letres. But I hawe been troubled with Hammilton [the Marquess of Hamilton], quho, being present by chawnce at my ressaving both of your first and seconde paquette out of Madrid, *wold needs peere over my showlder quhen I was reading thaime*, ofring even to helpe me to reade any harde wordis; and, in good faith, he is in this bussienesse, as in all thinges else, as variable and uncertaine as the Moone!' Afterwards, he says, 'But the newis of your glorious reception thaire makes me afrayed that ye will both miskenne your old Dade hear-

after.' Again, 'In earnist, my babie, ye must be spairing as ye can in your spending thaire.' At another place, in the very style of a nurse cajoling a child, 'My sweete gossope [Buckingham] shall have a fine shippe to go to Spain, to bring him home to his deare Dade.' Afterwards, to Charles, 'I pray you, my babie, take heade of being hurte if ye run at the tilte.' He concludes this letter, as he does many others, with 'God keepe you, my sweete boyes, with my fatherlie blessing, and send you a happie successful journey, and a joyefull and happie returne in the armes of your deare Dade.' Perhaps it is taking the poor King at disadvantage thus to show up his puling billets, written as they were so entirely without the idea that they should ever meet another eye than those for which they were intended; but every consideration, of course, must give way to the conveniences of history.

Another means which he had to beguile his time was the society of the female relations of Buckingham, and of their children, whom, during all his latter years, he seems to have constantly had about him. He tells Buckingham, in a letter of the 7th of April—'And now, my sweete Steenie and gosseppe, I muste give thee a shorte accounte of many things. First, Kate and thy sister supped with me on Saturdaye night laste, and yesterdaye both dined and supped with me, and see shall doe still, with Godds grace, as long as I am heere, and my little grandchylde, [the Marquess's infant daughter Mary,] with her fowre teeth, is, God be thanked, well wained, and theye are all very merrie.'* In such innocent and even childish subjects

* Mr Nichols, in giving this extract from James's cor-

of speculation did the British Solomon recreate himself in these his declining years.

No satisfactory solution has ever been given of the mystery which hangs over the disruption of the Spanish negotiation. The contract, after a thousand interruptions, was just on the point of being finally agreed upon; the Infanta was learning the English language, and had already, in consequence of a preliminary ceremony, assumed the title of Princess of England; in expectation of the arrival of the dispensation from Rome, a day not

respondence, adds the following rather severe note:—'Though James's want of dignity does not require exemplification, it is a strong proof how completely he had identified himself with his favourite's family, that he should condescend to interest himself even in the weaning of this infant. It being desirable that an event of such deep interest to a British monarch should be elucidated as much as possible, the reader will be happy to understand, that the original document, by which the Marchioness of Buckingham announced that event to his Majesty, is, among the many billets of Buckingham, preserved in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. It is as follows:—"May it pleas your Majestie, I have receved the two boxes of drid plums and grape, and the box of violatt caks and chickens; for all which I most humbly thank your Majestie." [The King was constantly making them such presents; and Buckingham, in several of his billets in the same collection, calls James his *good man purveyor.*] "I hope my Lord Auan has told your Majestie that I mean to wene Mall very shortly. *I wood not by any meane a don it, till I had first made your Majestie acquainted with it;* and by reason my cousin Brett's boy has binne ill of late, for fere she should greeve and spyle her milk, maks me very desirous to wene her, and I think she is olde enuf, and I hope will endure her wening very well; for I think there never was child card less for the brest than she dos; so I do entend to make trial this night how she will endure it," &c. &c.

far distant had been fixed upon, when the christening of the King of Spain's child, and the marriage of his sister, should be simultaneously celebrated; every person in the court, the Prince of Wales included, seemed to rejoice in the prospect of the final solemnity; when all at once that important individual announced his intention of returning home, leaving the Infanta to be married by proxy when the dispensation should arrive. The Catholic King received this intelligence with regret; nevertheless, as the Prince had been detained many months in expectation of the necessary precept from Rome, and as the winter was coming on, he could scarcely think it unreasonable. The two Princes took leave of each other, near the Escurial, with every token of respect and affection; his Catholic Majesty even ordered a monument, with a suitable inscription, to be reared on the spot where they had parted. Charles, however, had no sooner set his foot on board the English fleet, which waited for him at St Andero, than he publicly avowed resentment against the Spanish court for using him so ill; and he immediately sent back a letter to the Earl of Bristol, written by his own hand, commanding that minister on no account to implement the marriage till he should have further orders. He arrived in England, October 6th, determined, it would appear, to abandon all thoughts of the match.

The most probable reason that can be assigned for this strange revolution, is the interested policy of Buckingham, who, having irremediably disgusted the Infanta and her friends by his insolent bearing, and fearing of course that, in the event of a match, he should be ejected from the Prince's

favour, is supposed to have set himself to introduce contempt and hate into the mind of his young master, where formerly, if not absolute love, there was at least a strong disposition towards it. It might be supposed, that he could not break off the negotiation for fear of offending his elder master, whose heart had for so many years doated on the prospect of the Spanish alliance. But he knew that, so long as he possessed the entire affections of the Prince, and was doing a thing which was consistent with the wishes of the nation, he had little to dread from the infirm and aged King. The result showed that he did not miscalculate.

Charles, on reaching London, was received in those streets, through which he was destined some years after to be conveyed as a common malefactor, with demonstrations of popular rejoicing, which, for extravagance both in degree and kind, were never perhaps paralleled in the history of the nation. The gratification of the populace, however, could hardly equal that of his 'dear olde dadde,' which, if we are to believe Bishop Halket, was such as to 'surpass all relation.'—'His Majesty in a short while retired, and shut out all but his son and the Duke;* with whom he held conference till it was four hours in the night. They that attended at the door sometimes heard a still voice, and then a loud; sometimes they laughed, and sometimes they chafed; and noted such variety that they could not guess what the end might prove.' It turned out that evening at sup-

* Halket's Life of the Lord Keeper Williams. Buckingham had received a patent as Duke while in Spain, in reward for his services towards the very object which he was now engaged in neutralizing.

per, that the King was reconciled to the abandonment of the marriage, by information which the two adventurers gave him, as to the deceitfulness of Spain in the matter of the Palatinate. He let fall the memorable and honourable expression, that he would never wed his son with a portion of his daughter's tears. Yet probably this was but a temporary mood, and he might not the less be grieved next day, to think of the blight which had come over his long-cherished prospects, and the war into which he must now be precipitated.

The artifices practised by the English court to evade the performance of its sworn treaties were exceedingly base. Yet from the popular spirit already alluded to, that course was more heartily approved of by the nation than the fulfilment of its stipulations could have been; and for the time all sensation of dishonour was lost in the triumph of insulting an ancient enemy. Of course, the war which immediately became necessary, as it had always been wished in preference to peace and alliance, was equally a matter of general satisfaction. The Duke of Buckingham, who took the lead in causing it to be declared, became the most beloved character in the nation; and, with the exception of the King, who had still a mind to think correctly, though all power of command was given up to his son and favourite, there did not seem to have been an individual in the three kingdoms, who entered into the contest with reluctance.

The first proceeding in the war was necessarily the calling of a parliament to vote supplies. James met this assembly with humbled feelings—was now glad to ask their advice upon the subject of his

son's marriage, which just the preceding year he had forbidden them to speak of—and, in seeking for money, was so modest as to propose that it should be disbursed, not by himself, but by a committee of parliament. The senate entered heartily into his views regarding the war; and an army of six thousand men was soon after sent out to the Low Countries, to assist Count Mansfelt in the recovery of the Palatinate. It was evident, however, that he had left himself no influence in the empire—that every thing was now managed by Charles and Buckingham. That favourite had, since his return from Spain, become partly estranged from him, in order the better to secure the favour of Charles; yet such was the influence which long habit had fixed, that the poor King durst not make the slightest movement without the knowledge and consent of his beloved 'Steenie.' Under his Grace's direction, a treaty was entered into with France for the Princess Henrietta, as a match to the Prince of Wales; and, at his instance, the Earl of Middlesex, Lord High Treasurer of England, was prosecuted and condemned for alleged bribery, while his rival the Earl of Bristol, who had managed the Spanish negotiation with the most accomplished diplomatic skill, could hardly escape the same fate.

The Spanish court made a strange attempt at this time to release the monarch from a bondage which acted so violently against its interests. Inejosa, a minister of that country, still resided in London. He had long waited for an opportunity of speaking in private to the King, but never had found one, from the extreme vigilance with which he was watched by Buckingham and his-

creatures. At length, he one day found an opportunity of slipping a paper into his Majesty's hand, warning him with a wink to conceal it till he should be alone. This disclosed to James that there was a conspiracy on foot, for the purpose of causing him to resign the sceptre in favour of his son. Effectually alarmed at the intelligence, he requested to be informed of all the particulars; when, two of the minister's friends being secretly introduced to him, he learned, to his infinite surprise, that Buckingham, the creature of his own hands, whom but yesterday he had elevated from the condition of a friendless adventurer to be the most powerful man in England, was at the head of the plot, and even entertained a design against his life. It is impossible to describe the consternation, the offended feeling, the utter wretchedness, which the King experienced at this disclosure. He was completely unfitted by it for taking any effectual measures of prevention. Next time Buckingham entered his presence, he gazed fondly and despondingly at him for some time, and then burst out the maudlin exclamation, "Ah, Steenie, Steenie, wouldst thou kill me!" Of course, this provoked questions from Buckingham, which led to explanations from the King; after which only a few warm asseverations of innocence were required from the favourite to make all be forgiven and forgot.

The year 1624, the second last of his life, was thus spent by King James, in the experience, not only of much mental and bodily disease, but of a tyranny the most contemptible, and at the same time the most irresistible, that one man could exercise over another. The only refuge which the

poor monarch had, was to express, on all occasions when he thought himself safe, a peevish discontent at his situation, with a gentle censure of the proceedings of his son and favourite. This was the utmost length which his timid nature would permit him to go; when, in the presence of either of his tyrants, he endeavoured, in his fond forgiving good nature, to appear as familiar and gracious as ever. Buckingham, on the other hand, though still addressing him as his 'dear dad and gossip,' is observed, sometimes, in his letters, to take his Majesty to task very sharply regarding particular parts of his conduct. Occasionally, it happened, as the King could scarcely be prevented altogether from talking, that he would throw out hints against the measures which the two young men carried in opposition to his will; and, to do him justice, these hints were generally unexceptionable in point of theoretical wisdom. In reference, for instance, to the impeachments which they were presenting against the Earl of Middlesex, the Earl of Bristol, and others of his servants, who stood in their way, he uttered the prophetic remark to his son, that to bring public charges against the great officers of the crown, was just instructing the people to impeach sovereignty itself. But in regard to the real power of the government, he was reduced to little better than its nominal possession.

CHAPTER XII.

THE KING'S DEATH.

1625.

SINCE all manhood was thus dead in the King, and all that can make continued life respectable, it is more with a feeling of relief, than any other sensation, that we approach the period of his death. There is a pain in contemplating the goodly frame of a fellow-creature blasted by disease, or his mind darkened by madness, which ceases when we survey the accomplished work of the King of Terrors: the former are evils which the many pity in the few; the latter is an evil too much the common fate, and too certainly carrying with it a cure for all other ills, to be regarded with the same excited feelings.

One circumstance which added greatly to the misery of the aged King during his last year, was the death of his two nearest collateral kinsmen and most endeared friends, the Duke of Lennox, and the Marquess of Hamilton. These two noblemen, who had lived with him almost all their lives, enjoying their share in his good and bad fortune, were his cousins; and it would appear, that, amidst the deceitful splendours of his court, where

no profession could be held above suspicion, he relished their natural and unsuborned affection with the keenest enjoyment. Having loved them in life with a brother's love, he now lamented them with a brother's sorrow. Indeed, as his son was now no longer what a son ought to be to a father, and as no other person was at hand to cheer him with one sincere signal of kindness, he seems to have felt himself, after their death, as a lonely and desolate man upon the earth. He despondingly remarked, with that power of prophecy which is so often thought to arise at the close of life, that, now when the branches were cut down, the stock could not be expected to survive long;' * and probably the spirit of the prediction was not unaccompanied by a wish that it might be fulfilled.

Towards the end of 1624, his Majesty's health became exceedingly infirm. 'He kept his chamber all that Christmas,' says Mr Chamberlain, 'not coming once to the Chapel, nor to any of the plays; only, in fair weather, he looked abroad in his litter *to see some flights at the brook.*' It was on the 4th of March 1625, † when residing at Theobald's, that he was attacked by his last fatal illness, a tertian ague, which, though proverbially understood to be not dangerous in spring, ‡ soon showed that it was to get the mastery over his unwieldy and distempered form. 'Whether this arose,' says Wilson, 'from his care for his grandchildren, or the hazard and danger of his own person at home (being ever full of fears), or his en-

* Spottiswoode, 546.
† Laud's Diary.
‡ Wilson's Great Britain, 285.

gagement in a war abroad (being contrary to his very nature), or whether his full feeding and constant use of sweet wines set his gross humours at work, or what other accident caused his distemper, is uncertain.' It is probable, from a hint given by a contemporary, a hint consistent with his known antipathy to medicine, that this malady would not have soon assumed an alarming appearance, if he had at once become perfectly amenable to the advice of his physicians. From this cause, or otherwise, the ague, after a few fits, degenerated into a dangerous fever which raged with such violence, says a court letter-writer, as to strike 'much sense and fear into the hearts of all that looked upon him.'

On Tuesday, March 22, when this fever was at its height, and the King in a great measure insensible, the Countess of Buckingham and her son the Duke took advantage of a temporary absence of the regular physicians, to administer to his Majesty a certain potion, and to apply to his side a certain plaster, which, with a credulity that no class of society was then exempted from, they had procured from an inferior or empiric medicaner, noted among the vulgar for the cure of agues. This, at least, is the gentlest and the most probable construction that can be put upon the conduct of the favourite and his mother; though we may mention, that a very general impression prevailed afterwards, that he entertained no other design than that of removing his old master, in order to give place to the new. Whether this was the case or not, it is certain that the symptoms of his Majesty's illness increased violently from that hour. On the ensuing Thursday, feeling himself for cer-

tain tending death-ward, he resolved to take the sacrament, which was accordingly brought to him.

When this holy rite was about to be administered, the Lord Keeper Bishop Williams, who attended him instead of his favourite clergyman, Bishop Andrews, then confined at home with gout, inquired if he was prepared, in point of faith and charity, for so solemn an act of devotion. James answered by thanking God that he was. Being asked to declare his faith, and to state what he now thought of the books he had written on that subject, he repeated the articles of the Creed one by one, adding, in conclusion, "There is no other belief, no other hope;" and, having expressed his adherence to the interpretation given to that document by the Church of England, he said, 'with a kind of sprightliness or vivacitie, that whateven he had written of this faith in his life, he was ready to seal with his death.' Questioned further, on the subject of charity, he declared that he forgave all men who had ever offended him, and desired to be forgiven by all men whom he had in anywise offended. The Bishop then asked what were his sentiments as to absolution, the right of which was assumed by the Church of England; when he replied, without the slightest hesitation, "I have ever believed that that power resides in the Church of England; and that was unto me an evident demonstration, amongst others, that the Church of England is, without all question, the Church of Christ: therefore I, a miserable sinner, do humbly desire Almighty God to absolve me from my sins, and you, that are his servants in that high place, to afford me this heavenly comfort." The absolution being accordingly pronou-

ced, 'he received the Sacrament,' says Bishop Williams, reciting the transaction in a funeral sermon, 'with that zeal and devotion, as if he had not been a frail man, but a cherubim clothed with flesh and blood!'

The Prince of Wales and a great number of his attendants joined with him in this solemnity; and to them he addressed himself, after it was concluded, in a strain of the most devout and earnest piety. "Ah, my lords," said he, "if you would always do this when you are visited with sickness, you would be more comforted in your souls, and the world less troubled in questioning your religion." He afterwards expressed a desire to confer in private with his son; and all present were accordingly ordered to retire, except that individual. The subject of their conversation never became known; but that it was of serious import, seems probable from the care taken to prevent it from being overheard, all the attendants being withdrawn to the distance of two or three rooms.

During Friday and Saturday, his illness increased so much, that Sir William Paddy, one of his physicians, plainly told him that he could do no more than pray for his soul. His behaviour all along, and at this moment, is allowed to have been perfectly composed. Archbishop Abbot, who had now come at his request, to give him the benefit of his ghostly counsel, here joined Bishop Williams in requesting permission to pray for him; and accordingly, prayers were said by one or other of these prelates every hour till he died. They also caused him to adopt a pious expedient, said to have been practised by St Basil on his deathbed, that of uttering devotional ejaculations at every access

of his pains. Forty-one of these having been composed or selected for him, he 'was so ravished and comforted thereby,' says Bishop Williams, 'that, when he would groan under the pangs of death, yet was he ever still and quiet when they were infused into him. To one of them,' continues the Bishop, 'namely "Mecum eris in Paradiso," he replied presently, "Vox Christi!" meaning that he believed it to be the voice and promise of Christ. Another, "Veni, Domine Jesu, veni citò," he twice or thrice repeated.' All this time, his eyes were cast devoutly towards heaven, and every gesticulation and every expression betokened how entirely he was absorbed in the solemn task of preparing himself for dissolution.

He died on Sunday, the 27th, about noon, just as his religious attendants had concluded the prayer which the Church of England has appointed for dying persons; the last sentence, 'In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum,' having just left their mouth, when, as Bishop Williams informs us, 'without any pangs or convulsions at all, *dormivit Salomon*, Solomon slept.' The pious manner of his death, and the real magnanimity which he displayed under such trying circumstances, excited, we are told, the admiration of all who were present; and it must certainly be acknowledged that, whatever symptoms of irreverence or timidity he might have betrayed in the course of life, he was neither infidel nor coward at its conclusion.

James died in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and just as he had completed the twenty-second year of his reign as King of Great Britain. Over Scotland he had reigned nearly fifty-eight years; a period, it may be remarked, during which it

made a greater advance from barbarism towards civilization, than during any whole century of its previous history. His son Charles, now in his twenty-fifth year, was proclaimed King that afternoon at London.

Some of the *post-mortem* appearances of King James may lead, in the eyes of certain persons, to ideas regarding his character. On his body being opened two days after death, his heart was found to be very large, but soft; which Sir Simonds D'-Ewes remarks to have 'argued him very considerate, and therefore too fearful ever to attempt great actions.' His liver was as fresh as it generally is in youth; one of his kidneys very good, but the other shrunk so little that it could hardly be found; his lungs, gall, and the blood in general, black; which the physicians of that day argued to proceed from the melancholy under which he latterly suffered. What is the most remarkable circumstance, and that which will probably excite greatest speculation in the present age, his head, which was so exceedingly hard that it could scarcely be broken open with a chisel and saw, *seemed to contain an unusual quantity of brain*; insomuch that they could hardly keep it from spilling. A contemporary writer considers this to have been 'a mark of his infynite judgment;' and we have no doubt that certain philosophers of our own day will feel inclined to follow up the remark.

THE END.

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